





## Yemen: Eritrea trying to torpedo French mediation

SANAA (Agencies) — Yemen accused Eritrea on Monday of trying to torpedo French efforts to mediate a solution to a standoff between the two countries over strategic Red Sea islands.

"It is regrettable to see the Eritrean government beat around the bush and place new conditions to block application of a draft accord proposed by French mediator Francois Guttman and accepted by Yemen," an official spokesman said.

Eritrea "is deliberately ignoring the text of the draft agreement proposed by the French mediator" to block France's efforts to resolve the crisis which led to Eritrea's seizure of Hanish Al Kabir last December.

"Yemen reaffirms its will to renounce force and seek a peaceful settlement in line with the French draft," the spokesman said.

But Asmara on Sunday accused Yemen of delaying the

negotiations in a bid to buy time to prepare a military assault.

Yemen said earlier it had made several concessions to try to settle its territorial conflict with Eritrea which wanted to torpedo the mediation efforts and prepare to resume fighting.

Eritrea and Yemen both claim sovereignty over the Hanish archipelago which controls access to the Bab Al Mandab straits between the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden.

Besides France, Egypt and Ethiopia have offered to help resolve the crisis.

Eritrean authorities, meanwhile, said Yemen had not made any proposals on solving their dispute, but was instead buying time to prepare for war.

A statement passed by the Eritrean embassy to Reuters in the Kenyan capital of Nairobi on Monday said Eritrean officials met a French delegation on Sunday where

they restated Eritrea's position.

"To make the task of the facilitators — Ethiopia, Egypt, secretary-general of the U.N., France — productive, successful, as well as save time, the government of Eritrea's understanding and position on the dispute has been continuously presented clearly in writing," the statement said.

"The government of Yemen, however, has not presented any concrete ideas or views on their position. Rather, it has been deliberately fudging the issues while playing for time to prepare for war. This has been the main cause of the lack of progress of all these efforts," the statement added.

On Friday, Yemen reasserted it had sovereignty over a group of Red Sea islands also claimed by Eritrea, but said it wanted to find a peaceful solution to the dispute.

"At a time when (Yemen)

sticks to its rights of total sovereignty on the Hanish island and all the islands of the archipelago, it... will bear its full responsibility in front of the world community to arrive at peaceful solutions and avoid turmoil in the Red Sea area," a Yemeni government official said in a statement on Friday night.

The official said Yemen regretted recent remarks by Eritrea on the islands row, including a statement by the Eritrean embassy in Cairo on Friday which said Asmara was at odds with Yemen over what it called "the definition of the dispute."

Eritrea has raised the question of the Yemeni presence on the large island of Zuqur, to the north of the disputed Hanish islands where Yemeni and Eritrean forces clashed in December.

Yemen says the problem is the Eritrean military presence on the island of Greater Hanish.



CANNON FIRED TO MARK END OF RAMADAN: Rajaie Sanduka looks up in joy as his two sons cover their ears as he manages to fire successfully an old cannon in an East Jerusalem Muslim cemetery to signify the end of the Holy Month of Ramadan Monday. Mr. Sanduka carries on a generations-old tradition of firing the cannon to announce Ramadan's end and the start of the three-day Eid el-Fitr feast (Reuters photo)

## Pakistan, Afghan government decide to improve ties — Iran

TEHRAN (AFP) — Tensions have eased in relations between Pakistan and the Afghan government following indirect talks in Tehran, Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Alaeudin Borujerdi said Monday.

The talks conducted through Iranian intermediaries have "resulted in an outstanding development of ties between Afghanistan and Pakistan," Mr. Borujerdi, quoted by the official Iranian news agency IRNA, said.

"We will witness practical developments in relations between the two countries and the region in the future," he added without elaborating.

Relations have been strained between the government of President Burhanuddin Rabbani and Islamabad in the past few months over Kabul's charges that Islamabad supports the Taliban Islamic militia.

The Taliban, which burst onto the Afghan scene in

mid-1994 from the Koranic schools of Pakistan, controls large parts of Afghanistan and its militia is currently besieging Kabul in a drive to topple Mr. Rabbani and establish an Islamic state.

Islamabad has steadfastly denied the charges, but has until now called the beleaguered Kabul government "illegitimate," and demanded that Mr. Rabbani step down.

Tehran, deeply suspicious of the Taliban's rise, especially after its capture of territories bordering Iran in September, has been trying to convince Islamabad to reconcile its differences with Kabul.

It hopes that better relations will lead to a comprehensive settlement of the Afghan conflict and a more favourable balance of power in the neighbouring country.

"Iran is trying to put an end to the unfavourable state of Kabul-Islamabad ties and

help them to open a new chapter in their relations," said Mr. Borujerdi, who spearheads his country's peace efforts in Afghanistan.

He said Iran considered Mr. Rabbani's government "the only legal authority in Afghanistan, echoing similar remarks from other Iranian officials.

Mr. Borujerdi pledged, however, that his country would "spare no efforts to settle the Afghan conflict," through negotiations. The civil war "must come to an end."

Earlier, Afghan Foreign Secretary Najibullah Lafat, who has been here for trilateral talks with Iran and Pakistan since Saturday, called for improved ties with Pakistan.

"The government of Afghanistan is always interested in friendly and good relations with Pakistan," he said.

## 3 killed in Kabul rocket attack

KABUL (AFP) — Three civilians were killed and six others injured when a rocket slammed into their home in the south of the war-torn Afghan capital, hospital staff said Monday.

The rocket was part of a volley fired late Sunday by the Islamic Taliban militia who have been besieging Kabul for the last five months, defence officials said.

The victims were rushed to hospital after the strike in the suburb of Chelsitoon, which is near the frontline separating the government from the Taliban.

"Nine people were brought to the hospital, but unfortunately three were declared dead on arrival," a doctor at Karte Seh hospital told AFP.

Troops loyal to Afghan President Burhanuddin Rabbani on the city's southern frontline, said however that there had been no concerted attack by either side overnight.

"The exchange of artillery and rocket fire by both sides was routine and not out of the ordinary," one soldier said.

"But, as usual it is the innocent civilians who have no choice other than to live near here who have again suffered the worst effects of the Taliban's firing," he added.

The two sides have been facing each other

off south of here since the Islamic militia blockaded the city on three sides in October.

The city was then subjected to almost daily rocket and shell attacks until early last month, when they decreased suddenly in number as the Muslim Holy Month of Ramadan began.

The Taliban, who control about half of Afghanistan, have vowed to topple Mr. Rabbani and impose Islamic Sharia law in the country.

The militiamen, who sprang up out of the religious schools of southern Pakistan about 18 months ago, are demanding that Mr. Rabbani's nearly four-year-old government step down.

They are latest military faction to emerge here after 16 years of almost constant war which began when the Soviet Union invaded this country in 1979.

For the last four years, the former Mujahideen resistance groups which battled the Soviets and the last communist government here have been fighting bitterly among themselves for control of this stark and war-ravaged land.

Since 1992 when Afghanistan became an Islamic state, more than 25,000 civilians are estimated to have died in the conflict.

## Six killed in Somali factional fighting

MOGADISHU (AFP) — Six people were killed and 14 hurt Monday when some 260 militiamen loyal to Somali warlord Mohamed Farah Aidid attacked Dinsor district in central Somalia and engaged rival militias in fighting, field radio reports monitored here said.

A spokesman for the Rahanwein Resistance Army (RRA), which is opposed to Mr. Aidid, said the group engaged the attackers in battles but later retreated 10 kilometres, outside Dinsor.

The RRA, made up of members of the Rahanwein clan, was driven out of the central town of Baidoa, 120 kilometres northeast of Dinsor, by Gen. Aidid's militiamen who captured Baidoa last year.

The spokesman Ali Aden Margus said Gen. Aidid's fighters had also attacked

Shongole and Gurban villages near the western town of Bardera.

Both villages are situated in the Gedo region inhabited by the Marehan clan of former dictator Mohamed Siad Barre.

The Marehans, like the Rahanwein are opposed to Gen. Aidid's self-proclaimed "government" in Mogadishu. Gen. Aidid belongs to the Habr Gedir group.

Mr. Margus said Gen. Aidid was planning to capture the southern port city of Kismayo with the encouragement of banana exporters in the fertile Lower Juba region who have been finding it difficult to ship the product out of Somalia since the port of Mogadishu was closed because of factional rivalries in October.

Kismayo is controlled by Siad Barre's son-in-law Mohamed Said Hersi Morgan.

## Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood disapproves of party plan

CAIRO (R) — The leadership of the Muslim Brotherhood, Egypt's largest fundamentalist movement, disapproves of the conduct of some young members trying to set up a political party, the Brotherhood's spokesman said.

Maamoun Al Hodeibi, in an interview published in the international Arabic-language newspaper Al Hayat on Monday, said their conduct violated the movement's internal rules.

The young members, impatient with exclusion from the political scene, applied to the state in January for legal recognition as the centre party.

Mr. Hodeibi, in the strongest public criticism yet of the party's founders, said: "The circumstances surrounding this are not in harmony with the methods of the

Brotherhood, or the programme and rules which we have followed."

"Most of them are blameless and only some of them have misunderstood and their conduct was out of harmony with the group's own rules," he added.

Some other members of the Brotherhood initially thought the Brotherhood leadership had given the green light for the party to apply for recognition, he said. "But when the truth came out, attitudes changed," he added.

Mr. Hodeibi did not explain in detail the leadership's objections to the party, except to say that the time was right and the founders had been too hasty.

He also denied the Brotherhood had tried to discipline them. "They have all affirmed their complete commitment (to the Brother-

hood's principles)," he added.

The 74 founders are led by 34-year-old engineer Abul Ala Madi, who is secretary general of the Islamist-dominated engineers association.

Mr. Hodeibi said he doubted the state would approve the party, given the government's objections to what it says are parties based on religion.

One of the two main Muslim militant organisations in Egypt also said on Monday it opposed Islamists recognising the present political system and playing the party political game.

The Vanguard of Conquest, in a statement issued for the Muslim feast of 'Eid Al Fitr, said such Islamists had gone astray and should come back to the fold.

The organisation, a revival

of Jihad (holy struggle) movement which killed President Anwar Sadat in 1981, was clearly referring to the centre party.

"As the 'Eid comes round, some people have gone astray. We call on those who have chosen the peaceful way and democracy as a means to establish the law of God."

"And we say to them: 'You have recognised the tyrants, their constitutions and their laws so that they might let you turn turns in ruling, but that's absurd, quite absurd."

"And will you turn back? Renounce the tyrant and announce it to the people. Islam and godlessness are opposites that never can meet. Devote yourselves to missionary work and education and God will bring new generations to adopt the way of Jihad."

## Three children die, 30 injured in bus crash in n. Israel

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AP) — A tractor-trailer veered into oncoming traffic Monday and knocked a school bus off a mountain road, killing three children and injuring more than 30.

The bus carrying elementary school children crashed through a security rail and slammed into the side of a mountain, Israel radio said. One side of the bus was ripped off.

"I was talking to my girlfriend who was sitting next to me when I heard an explosion and glass fell on me," said passenger Shiran who was injured in the face by glass shards.

Speaking to Israel radio from a friend's home, Shiran said she was waiting to hear what happened to her brother who was missing after the accident. Shiran tried

to read from the Book of Psalms to calm herself, but burst into tears and could not go on.

Three children were killed in the crash near the northern city of Tiberias on the shores of the Sea of Galilee. The bus driver and two children, ages nine and 12, were seriously injured.

Dr. Yaacov Farstein, director of the Poriash Hospital in Tiberias, said that 53 people were treated at the hospital.

Dudi Golan, a motorist who witnessed the crash, said the tractor-trailer apparently was speeding. "He tried to stop, but the (back) trailer swerved to the side and although the bus driver tried to avoid getting hit, the back trailer hit the bus and pushed it off the road," Golan told the radio.

## 'Iranians barred from meeting rights envoy'

NICOSIA (AP) — Iranian authorities carried out an elaborate security operation to prevent a visiting U.N. human rights envoy from meeting with "genuine" human rights victims, an opposition group said Monday.

The Paris-based National Council of Resistance of Iran said authorities in the Islamic republic secretly relocated political prisoners and transferred others to train wagons to prevent the envoy, Canadian Maurice Copithorne, from meeting them.

Government agents disguised as political prisoners were also deployed in one jail, said the 235-member council, an umbrella body uniting Iran's diverse opposition groups.

Its claims, in a statement

faxed to the Associated Press in Cyprus, could not be independently confirmed and Mr. Copithorne himself said in Geneva Saturday he received full cooperation from Iranian authorities during his visit to IRNA earlier this month.

He said discussions with Iranian officials had taken up two thirds of the six-day visit and that he spent the rest of his time making private visits to human rights activists as well as several political prisoners.

He refused to comment on his impression of human rights in Iran, saying he had first to present his written report to the U.N. human rights commission.

A visit by a human rights envoy is a U.N. procedure reserved for the worst rights violators.

## JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

JORDAN TELEVISION	
Tel: 773111-19	
14:00	Captain Planet
14:30	Jonny Quest
14:50	It's the Happy Professor
15:00	Spirit of Adventure
15:40	Scientific Eye
16:10	Okavango
17:00	Ordy
17:15	Children's programme — Cupido
17:30	Serie — Les Compagnons De L'Aventure
18:00	Varieties — Celine Dion
19:00	Lc Journal
19:15	Magazine — Ushuaia
19:30	News Headlines
19:35	You Bet Your Life
20:00	Doc. — Oriental Rugs
20:25	Hawai Five-0
21:10	Drama — Harry
22:00	News In English
22:25	Three Sovereigns from Sarah
23:15	Feature Film
PRAYER TIMES	
04:56	Fajr
06:14	(Sunrise) Dhuhr
11:53	Dhuhr
15:57	'Asr
17:25	Maghrib
18:43	Isha
CHURCHES	
St. Mary of Nazareth Church, Sweileh, Tel. 610740	
Assembly of God Church, Tel. 632785	
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624990	
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440	
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757	
Terrence Church Tel. 622366	
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541	
Anglican Church Tel. 652326	
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 713331	
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 713331	
St. Ephraim Church Tel. 717151	
Armenian International Church Tel. 625226	
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 824328	
German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 845457	
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Tel. 659332	
Church of Nazareth Tel. 675691	
The Evangelical Local Church In Amman Tel. 811295	
WEATHER	
Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.	
Skins will be partly cloudy with a chance for scattered showers and winds westerly light to moderate. On Thursday and Friday, it will be sunny with a gradual rise in temperatures.	
Min./Max. temp.	
Amman ..... 5/16	
Aqaba ..... 11/24	
Dzair ..... 4/17	
Jordan Valley ..... 12/23	

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS	
NIGHT DUTY	
AMMAN:	
Dr. Afif Shukri	898863
Dr. Hisham Kan'an	790286
Dr. Salim Daboubi	776751
Dr. Osama Al Hussein	847289
Fendos pharmacy	776336
Al Asma pharmacy	637055
Nairokh pharmacy	623672
Al Salam pharmacy	636730
Shimshan pharmacy	644945
Nairokh pharmacy	637660
Najib pharmacy	623672
Najib pharmacy	847632
IBRD:	
Dr. Ahmad Qanu	281741
Aqaba pharmacy	(—)
ZARQA:	
Dr. Salah Safarini	987565
Khalif pharmacy	985417
EMERGENCIES	
Food Control Centre	637111
Civil Defence Department	661111
Civil Defence Immediate	

Yesterday's high temperatures:	Amman 16, Aqaba 24. Humidity readings: Amman 62 per cent, Aqaba 32 per cent.
Rescue	630341
Civil Defence Emergency	199
Rescue Police 192, 621111, 637777	
Fire Brigade	617101
Blood Bank	775121
Highway Police	843402
Traffic Police	896390
Public Security Department	630321
Hotel Complaints	605800
Price Complaints	661176
Water and Sewerage	
Complaints	897467
Amman Municipality	
Complaints	787111
Telephone Information	
(directory assistance)	121
Overseas Calls	010230
Central Amman Telephone	
Repairs	623101
Abdell Telephone Repairs	661101
Jordan Television	773111
Radio Jordan	774111
Water Authority	680100
Jordan Electricity Authority	815615
Electric Power Company	636381
RJ Flight Information	08-53200
Queen Alia Intl. Airport	08-53200
HOSPITALS	
AMMAN:	
Hussein Medical Centre	813813/32
Khalid Maternity, J. Amn	644281/6
Aklich Maternity, J. Amn	642411/2
Jabal Amman Maternity	642362

Malhas, J. Amman	636140
Palestine, Shmeisani	607071
Shmeisani Hospital	609131
University Hospital	845845
Al-Musharraf Hospital	6672219
The Islamic, Abdali	660127/57
Al-Ahli, Abdali	664164/6
Italian, Al-Muhajreen	777101/2
Al-Bashir, J. Ashrafich	775111/26
Army, Marks	891611/15
Queen Alia Hospital	660100
Amal Hospital	607155
The Arab Centre for Heart and Special Surgery	845199
ZARQA:	
Zarqa Govt. Hospital	(09)983323
Zarqa National Hospital	(09)900590
Ibn Sina Hospital	(09)986732
Al Hikma Modern Hospital	(09)990990
IBRD:	
Princess Basma Hospital	(02)275555
Greek Catholic Hospital	(02)272275
Don Al Nafec Hospital	(02)247100
AQABA:	
Princess Haya Hospital	(03)314111
FOR THE TRAVELLER	
QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT	
ARRIVALS	
Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)	
06:05	Jakarta, Kuala Lumpur (RJ)
07:30	Damascus (RJ)
09:25	Abu Dhabi (RJ)
11:05	Madrid, Casablanca (RJ)
11:45	Montreal, Toronto (RJ)

18:05	Muscat, Dubai (RJ)
18:05	Beirut (RJ)
18:15	Doha, Bahrain (RJ)
16:20	Cairo (RJ)
17:15	Chicago, Amsterdam (RJ)
18:00	London, Frankfurt (RJ)
Other Flights (Terminal 2)	
11:15	Aden, Hudaib (DY)
13:10	Frankfurt (YP)
14:20	Rome (AZ)
14:55	Munich, Aleppo (YP)
18:15	Dubai (EK)
20:10	Beirut (ME)
23:40	Amsterdam (KL)
06:25	Bucharest (RO)
01:10	London (RJ)
Royal Wings (RW) Flights (Marka Airport)	
21:25	Aqaba (RW)
22:25	Aqaba (RW)
17:30	Aqaba (add) (RW)
19:00	Aqaba (add) (RW)
DEPARTURES	
Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)	
06:15	Beirut (RJ)
08:30	Amsterdam, New York (RJ)
11:00	Madrid, Casablanca (RJ)
11:45	Montreal, Toronto (RJ)

11:10	Vienna, Frankfurt (RJ)
11:25	Geneva, Brussels (RJ)
12:40	Paris (RJ)
12:45	London (RJ)
12:15	Cairo (RJ)
20:30	Damascus, Larnaca (RJ)
20:35	Jeddah (RJ)
21:00	Abu Dhabi, Jakarta (add) (RJ)
22:05	Kuala Lumpur, Singapore (RJ)
Other Flights (Terminal 2)	
06:00	Damascus, Paris (AF)
12:15	Hudaib, Sanaa, Aden (DY)
15:20	Damascus (AZ)
15:45	Munich (YP)
19:15	Dubai (EK)
06:40	Amsterdam (KL)
01:55	Bucharest (RO)
Royal Wings (RW) Flights (Marka Airport)	
07:00	Aqaba (RW)
08:00	Aqaba (RW)
16:30	Aqaba (add) (RW)
18:00	Aqaba (add) (RW)
HJAZ RAILWAY TRAIN	
Dep. Amman	8:00 every Monday
Arr. Damascus	5:00 p.m. every Monday

MARKET PRICES	
Upper/lower price in fils per kg.	



## Last day of Ramadan

The young and not so young rejoice in the years-old tradition of shopping for the Eid, the feast that follows the fasting days of the holy month of Ramadan. It is time for street vendors to display goods of all sorts for different tastes and whims. If only we knew what the white fleeced lamb thought of his wheel ride... Happy Eid to all our dear readers! (photos by Rana Hussein)



## Fierce competition expected as nine candidates vie for JBA presidency

By Lola Keilani  
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Nine lawyers intend to run for the presidency of the Jordanian Bar Association (JBA) in the March elections, as the president's seat became vacant following the appointment of Kamal Nasser as minister of social development.

According to a JBA source who asked not to be identified, the strongest candidates for the seat are Walid Abdul Hadi, a former two-term president of the JBA and nationalist, Hussein Mjall, a former member of Parliament and nationalist, and Salih Armuti, a member in the JBA council and an Islamist.

Last week the Islamists in the 3,000 strong JBA general assembly unanimously agreed on Mr. Armuti's candidacy, the source said.

According to another JBA source, the nationalists are divided among themselves as to who of their two candidates running for the position they should vote for.

"With both lawyers Abdul Hadi and Mjall representing the same trend, Mr. Armuti has a stronger chance of winning," the source said.

Ziad Khasawneh, the JBA vice president, who confirmed last week that he would be running for the presidential seat, is currently reconsidering his decision.

Mr. Khasawneh told the

Jordan Times that he was assessing the situation and that it was too early for him to decide, especially that many lawyers have announced their intention to run.

Mr. Khasawneh confirmed that West Bank lawyers, around 235 out of the 3,000 registered, would participate in the elections.

Following elections in 1995, two complaints were filed against the president of the association and council members.

The first was filed by then Minister of Justice Hisham Tal against the participation of lawyers from the West Bank. The Minister had instructed the JBA to strike out all West Bank members from the association's roster and to prohibit

them from participation in the 1995 elections since the Kingdom had severed all legal ties with the West Bank in 1988.

The new Minister of Justice, Abdul Karim Duhami, announced last week his ministry had dropped the case against the JBA.

The second complaint was filed by Khalaf Masaadeh, former candidate who was defeated in the 1995 elections and who intends to run for the March election.

Mr. Masaadeh told the Jordan Times that running for the presidency and challenging the validity of the last election of the JBA are two separate issues.

## Jordanian editor sues Iraqi defector for alleged death threat

By Jamal Halaby  
The Associated Press

AMMAN (AP) — A Jordanian newspaper editor said Monday he has filed a lawsuit against a senior Iraqi defector for alleged defamation and a death threat.

Nayef Tawarrath, editor-in-chief of the weekly Al Bilad, said he filed the case with the Amman district court after Lt. Gen. Hussein Kamel "told me he was sending his bodyguards after me to liquidate me."

"In addition to the death threat, I sued him for slander because he cursed me and insulted my staff in two separate telephone calls," Mr. Tawarrath told the Associated Press.

He said he filed the law-

suit Saturday, three days after the alleged death threat, which the editor had reported to authorities.

Gen. Kamel, a key figure behind Iraq's secret weapons programmes and son-in-law of Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein, fled to Jordan in August and vowed to topple the Iraqi leadership.

But Gen. Kamel failed to win the support of Iraqi dissidents in exile, who say he had been too involved in the Baghdad regime's oppressive policies.

Sources close to the defector, speaking on condition of anonymity, said Gen. Kamel was frustrated and had suffered a nervous breakdown because of the snub, which also inspired him to change his harsh line against President Saddam.

The shift was obvious in recent Arab newspaper reports which quoted him as praising the political reforms Baghdad has announced and saying he contemplates returning to Iraq soon.

Mr. Tawarrath said he was not sure what prompted the death threat, but "Gen. Kamel was apparently enraged by the text of an interview we conducted with him and which appeared in the newspaper a week ago."

In that interview, the defector reportedly denied he was considering a return to Iraq or to seek asylum in Syria, which he has visited several times since his defection.

He was also quoted as saying that President Sad-

dam was treated for 15 years for the Hodgkin's disease, a cancer of the lymph system.

"My impression is that the interview had embarrassed him with the Syrians or that it impeded his efforts to reconcile with the Iraqi leadership," Mr. Tawarrath said.

Other sources, however, said the general was misquoted in the original interview, which was conducted and published in a newspaper in the Arab Gulf.

He said Gen. Kamel initially denied to authorities that he threatened him, "but after he knew that I had recorded his threats, he changed his statement and said he had been angry and could not control himself."

## Ministry builds field hospital in Petra

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Ministry of Health is currently building a field hospital near the ancient city of Petra to provide medical services to the growing number of visitors to the ancient site and the local community, as well.

A Ministry of Health official told Jordan Television

that the hospital will be offering first aid and emergency medical services to the tourists. He said that the ministry was recruiting medical staff to man the new facility and providing it with hospital beds and various equipment.

The source said that the hospital site has a heliport

for the transportation of emergency cases that require treatment in Amman hospitals.

According to Ministry of Tourism figures more than a million visited Jordan in 1995, a majority of which have visited Petra.

The figures show a 25 per cent increase in the total

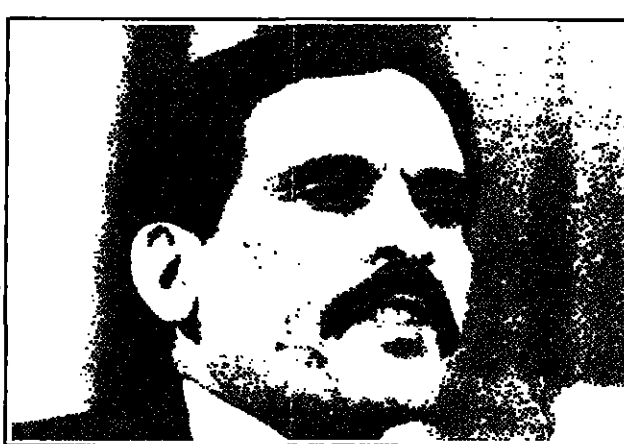
number of visitors over 1994.

The Ministry of Water and Irrigation earlier this month announced the start of work on projects to ensure continued supply of water to the Petra region and its hotels and tourist facilities.

## Srouf urges journalists to campaign for their cause

AMMAN (J.T.) — Speaker of the Lower House of Parliament Saad Hayel Srouf has called on journalists to meet with deputies in Parliament and participate in discussions on the proposed amendments to the existing Press Association Law.

"A draft law on the press association is now before the House for debate and I call on journalists concerned over the future of their association and its performance to come forward and air their views and participate in discussions," said Mr. Srouf at a meeting with journalists held at Al Dustour daily.



Saad Hayel Srouf

"The House's Legal Committee would like to hear the views of the journalists about the association's draft law and the committee will welcome journalists' views before it can submit its recommended draft law to Parliament for discussion and approval," said Mr. Srouf.

He was replying to a call by journalists for an amendment to or change of the existing law as it was obsolete and did not cater to the requirements of the democratic process in Jordan.

Regarding the election law, Mr. Srouf said that a draft amendment to the existing law had not yet reached Parliament from the government.

"I admit that we can find a more suitable method for voting in general elections than the one-person, one-vote system, and we can find a middle way between the one-person, one-vote and the list of names or bloc system especially applicable to some governorates," Mr. Srouf said.

"While the one-person one-vote system has been found to be successful in other countries of the world it does not necessarily mean that it is good for Jordan, and therefore we ought to think of other formulas that can best suit our environment and our society," he added.

However, he said, the House would deal with the draft law or amendments to the present law realistically and objectively and in

accordance with our convictions, and "in my view, Parliament should start debating a draft law or amendment to the existing one as soon as possible and before the end of the current parliamentary session."

Asked to assess the Parliament's stand regarding the new government of Abdul Karim Kabariti, Mr. Srouf said that "The government will be scrutinised under the microscope after it has secured a vote of confidence."

"Any government should adhere to its constitutional responsibilities and take into consideration all resolutions and recommendations passed by the Parliament as these are the main principles by which a government can be

judged," he added.

"I believe that in order for a government to be successful and carry out its business it must secure a majority of votes in Parliament," he added.

Asked on the role of Parliament in bolstering inter-Arab relations, Mr. Srouf said the House had played a key role in this regard through its participation in various Arab parliamentary meetings and its interaction with other Arab parliaments in matters of concern to the Arab World.

He cited Parliament's participation in the Arab parliamentary meeting held in Morocco in 1995 and the Inter-Parliamentary Union meeting held earlier in Madrid. "The Jordanian Parliament played a key role in breaking the ice that marred relations among Arab countries as a result of the Gulf crisis at a time when Arab regimes were still divided by differences over that crisis," he added.

Referring to the peace treaty, he said: "Debates about that treaty consumed a great deal of time in the previous session of parliament because the treaty was on the minds of the majority of the Jordanians."

He added: "It is hoped that the Parliament will now focus more attention on domestic affairs which are of direct concern to the public, like reforming the public administration and fighting corruption."

## Government is culprit in white meat crisis, officials and consumers charge

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Ministry of Supply and the Jordanian Consumer Protection Society (JCPS) have both called for measures to end the current shortage in poultry meat and its spiralling prices which have hit hard at limited income groups.

In interviews published in the local press Monday ministry official Akel Dabbas said that the government should rescind an order issued earlier in February allowing the private sector and not the Ministry of Supply to import the poultry meat.

"Opening the door for the merchants to import any amount of poultry meat without issuing control measures is hurting the local market and the interest of the local consumers who are paying exorbitant prices to get their needs," Mr. Dabbas, the head of the ministry's quality control department, was quoted as saying.

He said that the Ministry of Supply should be responsible for importing poultry meat and fixing its prices to ensure fairness and justice.

Referring to the shortage crisis he said that before the start of Ramadan the Ministry of Supply received assurance from the Ministry of Agriculture that the Kingdom had sufficient amounts of poultry meat but it turned out that was not the case and the situation was aggravated during the month when consumers turned to poultry as they shunned eating fish because of earlier reports about its contamination.

The Consumer Society President Mohammad Obeidat, echoed the Ministry's call by urging the government not to allow merchants to import poultry meat. He said some rich merchants had been putting pressure on the government to allow them to import white meat to meet the local market demand and at the same time seeking that customs duty on imported poultry meat be reduced.

"The society is against allowing the rich merchants to import the meat because their sole objective is to monopolise imports and dominate the

markets and keep the consumers under their mercy," Dr. Obeidat said.

He said allowing merchants to import poultry meat also results in harming the interests of the local poultry farmers.

Farmers interviewed by the press have been unanimous in accusing the Ministry of Supply for the present crisis. "The ministry demands that the farmers sell a kilo of poultry meat for 9.70 fils when it knows too well that this leads to loss because of the high prices of poultry feed and other expenses," Yousef Ajouri, a poultry farm owner said. "My own losses this season were estimated at 6,000 birds due to poisoning after eating government-imported corn that was later proved to be contaminated," Mr. Ajouri said.

His views were echoed by Mohammad Silawi, another farm owner who said that the cost of animal feed and a healthy environment for the chicken during the winter season made it impossible for the farmers to sell at profit.

Saad Nobani, a store keeper selling poultry meat in Amman said that the Ministry of Supply should allow the market forces of supply and demand to control the prices.

He said that while the ministry allows the owners of the Jordanian Poultry Company (Duleil company) to sell chicken at prices higher than the current rates it is imposing a fine reaching up to JD 200 on stores that violate its tariff.

Kamal Ibrahim, Duleil company manager, replied by saying that some stores have been selling a kilo of poultry meat for JD 1.5, but company was selling at the rate of JD 1.26 a kilo. He noted that the shortage of poultry meat was due to two reasons: One, that most farmers decline to raise chickens during the winter season due to the high cost of services, like keeping the birds warm and the high cost of feed on the one hand, and due to the unexpected increase in demand during Ramadan. He expected prices to return to normal after Eid Al Fitr holiday.



## Top Russian general vows to destroy Chechen rebel base

MOSCOW (R) — Russia's top general in the north Caucasus vowed Monday to "eliminate" by the end of the day a group of Chechen rebels besieged in the eastern village of Novogrozny, ITAR-TASS news agency said.

General Anatoly Kvashnin was speaking as citizens in the area told local reporters that Russian artillery and helicopter gunships attacked Novogrozny and the neighbouring village of Bochi-Yurt. There was no independent confirmation.

"By the end of the day the federal forces blockading a group of rebels in the village of Novogrozny will end an operation to eliminate them," TASS quoted Gen. Kvashnin as saying in the Chechen capital Grozny.

The general commands Russia's north Caucasus military district.

He said that civilians had left Novogrozny through corridors left by the Russian troops and only fighters of separatist leader Dzhokhar Dudayev remained there.

Russian forces have trapped up to 1,000 separatist rebels in the eastern Chechen village of Novogrozny but were unable to advance on them Monday because of heavy fog, Interfax News Agency said.

The agency quoted an Interior Ministry officer in Chechnya as saying Russian troops and weaponry were being concentrated around the village, where they have fought skirmishes with the rebels in the last few days.

A separate Interfax report said Russian troops had killed or wounded 30 rebel guerrillas in the last 24 hours when they tried to break out of Novogrozny.

In the whole of the rebel region, three Russian servicemen have been killed and 10 wounded in the same period, it said.

The rebels gave no details of the fighting and independent confirmation of the report was not immediately possible.

Talks between Russian forces, positioned two kilometres from Novogrozny, Chechen government officials and village leaders failed to reach an agreement and fighting raged throughout Sunday, ITAR-TASS news agency said.

Moscow regards Novogrozny as a stronghold of fighters loyal to separatist leader Dzhokhar Dudayev in the 14-month-old conflict over Chechnya's independence drive.

Rebel Commander Salman Raduyev also chose the village as the site to release hostages he seized in a raid by a guerrilla group which he led into neighbouring Dagestan last month.

Several Russian policemen are still being held there and the two sides have failed so far to agree on an exchange of the policemen for rebels captured during the raid.

"The situation around Novogrozny remains tense and fighting with Mr. Dudayev's militants has not stopped," the officer told Interfax.

Russian President Boris Yeltsin is working on a peace initiative to try to end the conflict before a presidential election in June in which he will seek a second term.

Sergei Belyaev, head of the only pro-government group in the Russian parliament, was quoted by Interfax as saying Mr. Yeltsin had to end the conflict before the poll to have a good chance of winning.

But, referring to unnamed hawks in Moscow who oppose ending the conflict, he added: "Both in Chechnya and in the centre there are forces which are hindering a peaceful solution to the Chechen problem."

Mr. Yeltsin was quoted by Interfax as saying he was awaiting proposals from two commissions that have been set up to search for ways of ending the fighting. Thousands of people have been killed, many of them civilians.



German Chancellor Helmut Kohl (right) gestures as he talks to Russian President Boris Yeltsin prior to their meeting in the Kremlin Monday. Mr. Kohl is on a three-day official visit to Russia (Reuters photo)

## Yeltsin tells Kohl reform will continue in Russia

MOSCOW (R) — President Boris Yeltsin assured visiting German Chancellor Helmut Kohl Monday that he would not depart from the reforms he has launched in Russia.

"I have assured Helmut Kohl that I will continue the reforms and will not deviate from them a single centimetre," he told reporters after talks with Mr. Kohl. He declared that he had decided to seek re-election in June to conclude the reforms.

Mr. Kohl, who is spending three days in Moscow and St. Petersburg, was the first Western leader to meet Mr. Yeltsin since the Kremlin leader announced last Thursday that he would run in a presidential election in June.

Mr. Yeltsin, 65, alarmed reformers at home and abroad by sacking several top liberals and by making big spending promises

in recent weeks as he geared up to announce he was seeking a second term in office.

The opposition Social Democrats (SPD) said Mr. Kohl's trip was a personal endorsement of Mr. Yeltsin.

German officials have said Mr. Kohl, Mr. Yeltsin's closest Western ally, intends to back reforms rather than a specific candidate in the election.

But the chancellor welcomed the Kremlin chief's decision to run and see reforms through.

"It is not my job to comment on Russian presidential elections but as German chancellor, I welcome the link Boris Yeltsin has just drawn between his wish for a second term in office and the reform policies," Mr. Kohl said.

## Poll: More Britons desert royal family

LONDON (R) — The British public stood by their royal family through the row over King Edward VIII's abdication, the divorce of Queen Elizabeth's sister and even the break-up of the marriage of Prince Charles, the heir to the throne.

But now, worn down by a succession of scandals, Britons increasingly agree that the royal family is an expensive luxury the country can no longer afford, an opinion poll said.

The Mori poll published by the Independent On Sunday newspaper said two out of three people thought Britain would not suffer if the monarchy was abolished and 42 per cent thought Queen Elizabeth and her relatives cost the country too much.

Only 41 per cent believed Prince Charles would make a good king, while 40 per cent thought he would be a bad one. As recently as 1991, 82 per cent said he had what it took to rule.

The royal family's popularity has been eroding steadily. The percentage of Britons saying that the country would be worse off without royalty has fallen from 50 per cent in May 1992 and 40 per cent in December 1994 to 34 per cent now.

The royals, to be sure, have been through some bad years as royal marriages fell apart amid acrimony and title-tattle about extramarital liaisons.

The security of the monarchy had seemed assured in 1981 when Prince Charles married shy, blonde Princess Diana in a romantic ceremony that captivated the world's imagination. A year later, a golden-haired heir was born.

But the fairy-tale image of the royal family as a symbol of British nationhood and a shining example of conventional morality

collapsed in 1992.

Prince Andrew, the queen's second son, split from his boisterous wife Sarah, nicknamed Fergie, after six years of marriage. A few months later pictures were published showing Fergie frolicking topless with financial adviser John Bryan.

Princess Anne, the queen's daughter, got divorced and Prince Charles and Princess Diana topped off the queen's "annus horribilis" by announcing they were separating. Not since Edward VIII stepped down from the throne in 1936 rather than give up American divorcee Wallis Simpson had Buckingham Palace known such a domestic upset.

The 1978 divorce of the queen's sister, Princess Margaret, from photographer Lord Snowdon was accepted with more equanimity.

The royal institution has been rocked by more than just marital scandal. Newspapers have questioned whether the royals were overpaid and the queen has finally agreed to pay tax.

Fergie's free-spending ways have provided lively fodder for press headlines, while virtually every top royal, from Prince Charles to his father Prince Philip, have seen transcripts of their intimate telephone conversations plastered on the front pages.

The daily fare now focuses on when Prince Charles and Princess Diana, who have both admitted adultery in carefully orchestrated television interviews, will finally divorce.

Buckingham Palace has confirmed that the queen wants this — the question is on what terms. "The princess is still considering her position," said a Buckingham Palace spokeswoman.

## Princess Diana's Pakistan trip threatens to turn sour

ISLAMABAD (AFP) — Britain's Princess Diana arrives in Pakistan Tuesday for a private visit to promote her charitable work that threatens to spark a new royal controversy.

The Princess of Wales is to go to Lahore to visit a cancer hospital as the guest of cricket legend Imran Khan, who was the captain of the Pakistan team that won the 1992 World Cup, a spokesman for the princess said in London.

Imran, once renowned for his playboy lifestyle, raised the money for the Shaaukat Khanum Memorial Hospital, which is named after his mother, who died of cancer.

Reliable sources confirmed Monday that the estranged wife of Prince Charles is to spend three days in Lahore as the guest of Imran and his wife Jemima.

But the British embassy in Islamabad was informed of the visit only at the last minute.

"We have not been involved at all in the visit," a British diplomat here said, adding that it was "completely private."

The Pakistan government will be responsible for security arrangements, and all efforts will be made to keep Princess Diana away from prying eyes.

Imran, 43, married Jemima Goldsmith, the daughter of the Franco-British billionaire Sir James Goldsmith, last year.

But he has also been courted by some politicians as a potential alternative to incumbent Premier Benazir Bhutto.

Princess Diana is expected to arrive in the private jet of Sir James Goldsmith, in the company of Anabel Goldsmith, Jemima's mother, reliable sources said.

Imran will host a private dinner, where the princess will be the guest of honour, and other guests will include major benefactors of his cancer hospital. Observers have suggested this could be easily interpreted as a slight by Ms. Bhutto.

"Even though Imran may not intend it, the visit will be a major political snub to Bhutto, because she is unlikely to be invited to the dinner," said a senior Pakistani bureaucrat quoted by the Nation.

Princess Diana is also expected to meet Hasnat Khan, a Pakistani cardiologist who is reportedly a heart surgeon at the Royal Brompton Hospital in London.

The British popular press has linked Princess Diana with the specialist, and sources close to his family say he will be in Lahore at the same time as the princess and will show her round the town's principal historic sites.

Lahore's main daily, the Nation, Monday quoted Western diplomats as saying the Foreign Office in London was unlikely to approve of the trip.

Imran has frequently accused Pakistan's politicians of being deeply corrupt and has particularly taken the Bhutto government to task, resulting in a blackout on him by the state media and television.

## Japanese held for smuggling rare tortoises

TOKYO (AFP) — Japanese police have arrested a 60-year-old man attempting to smuggle 39 rare tortoises into the country from Bangkok, a police spokesman said. The man, identified as Shigeru Yamamoto, was discovered carrying the tortoises concealed in a large bag when he arrived at Narita Airport on Jan. 27. He allegedly bought the tortoises for about 110,000 yen (\$1,050) and planned to sell them to pet shops at more than 100 times the purchase price. Mr. Yamamoto was carrying 20 Indian star tortoises native to southern India which can fetch up to 100,000 yen each in Japan. He was also carrying 19 Aldabra giant tortoises which are native to the Seychelles and Aldabra Island north of Madagascar and can fetch up to 500,000 yen, the spokesman said. Police are checking whether Mr. Yamamoto carried out similar smuggling attempts as he has travelled between Thailand and Japan 26 times over the past two years, the spokesman said. Under a United Nations Convention on Endangered Species, both tortoises require permits from the country of export.

## Smouldering burger prompts emergency landing

DETROIT (R) — A greasy hamburger left in a jet's galley oven forced a Northwest Airlines flight bound for Tampa to make an emergency landing at Detroit Metropolitan Airport after the meat started smouldering. A spokeswoman for Northwest Airlines in Minneapolis said 172 passengers and seven crew members aboard flight 480 exited the Boeing 757 by sliding down emergency chutes shortly after landing. One person twisted an ankle and was treated at a local hospital.

## World's oldest woman to release funk-rap CD

MARSEILLE (R) — France's Jeanne Calment, the world's oldest person, celebrates her 121st birthday this week by releasing a compact disc of techno and funk-rap music. Breaking a longevity record with every heartbeat, Ms. Calment is to unveil the CD in Saintes-Maries-de-La-Mer, a gypsy pilgrimage sea resort near the Provence town of Arles where she was born in 1875 and once met Dutch artist Vincent Van Gogh.

## Japanese man arrested for keeping his son chained

TOKYO (R) — Japanese police have arrested a man for keeping his teenage son in chains and forcing him to work on construction sites instead of allowing him to go to school. Unemployed Masayuki Takao, 44, was arrested on charges of assault and violation of the employment security law, which bans forced labour, a police spokesman in Amagasaki, western Japan said Wednesday. His 15-year-old son had a U-shaped lock used to secure bicycles around his neck and bruises all over his body when he ran to police for protection Saturday. Police said the boy had apparently been kept chained up at home for at least a few years, but they did not know exactly how long. They said the boy had been forced to ask his father every time he wanted to go to the lavatory. The boy had been absent from school for more than a year, police said. His father had forced him to work and used an estimated \$1,200 the boy earned for gambling and to repay debt.



The stricken oil tanker Sea Empress is filmed by cameramen as the sun rises Monday. A new team of marine engineers was Monday being airlifted aboard in an attempt to lessen the risk of further environmental damage (Reuters photo)

## British salvagers hope tanker will hold together overnight

MILFORD HAVEN, Wales (R) — Raging seas forced a salvage team to abandon the heaving deck of a grounded supertanker off the south Wales coast, Coast Guards said.

The Sea Empress, which first ran aground Thursday, was leaking oil but was in no immediate danger of breaking up, they said. It was being held in place by two tugs late Sunday and seemed to be partly afloat.

A half-mile-long oil slick could be clearly seen trailing from both sides of the vessel and waves crashed over the deck as the tanker listed at an angle in the grey, surging seas.

Once winds died down, the Coast Guard said, salvagers would try to drain the 130,000 tonnes of light crude from the Liberian-registered ship. A force nine gale was forecast for the area Sunday night.

"She is leaking... But it appears to be coming from two discrete areas," Joe Small, head of the Marine Pollution Control Unit, told a news conference.

A five-member salvage team, winched from helicopters onto the tossing deck, earlier connected lines to two large tugboats and inspected the ship's engine rooms. They said the engines were dry and in apparent working order.

Peter Cooney, managing director of Acomar, which operated the Sea Empress, said salvagers were working in extreme conditions.

"You must understand that you are under significant forces here — the sea, the wind and the weather and indeed the tide," he

told Sky Television.

"The game plan is to control the ship as much as is practically possible. The ship to a very large extent will control her own destiny because this is a 140,000-tonne vessel that has no propulsion."

Mr. Cooney said only about 200 tonnes of oil had leaked from the tanker. Aircraft sprayed dispersant on the oil slick trailing from the vessel.

The Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA) launched an operation to save as many sea-birds, dolphins and seals as possible from the oil.

Conservationists say the area is home to as many as 100,000 birds. Rare red-throated divers and guillemots have already been found coated with oil.

The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) said it was worried about government policies on prevention of oil spills.

"It is of great concern to the RSPB that government appears to be courting disaster by permitting oil and gas exploration in highly sensitive marine and coastal areas around Britain," said Philip Rothwell, head of policy operations.

"Shipping safety regulations still fail to address risks to the environment," said a spokesman for the Worldwide Fund for Nature (WWF). "If the Sea Empress had had a double hull and back-up systems to prevent loss of control this terrible incident might never have happened."

## Colombian president denies reports he weighs resignation

BOGOTA, Colombia (R) — President Ernesto Samper Sunday denied a report in the New York Times that quoted him as saying he was trying to find a dignified way to leave office amid mounting drug corruption charges.

"It is totally false that President Samper confirmed he was (looking) to be able to leave in a dignified way," read a statement released by Colombia's presidential palace.

In an interview in Sunday's edition of the Times, Samper was quoted as saying he was looking for a way out of office as he faced indictment on criminal charges. "What I am seeking is to be able to leave in a dignified way," he was quoted as saying. "When? That depends on the conditions of governability (of the country) ... I would not do the country harm."

The palace statement said Mr. Samper had been misquoted. "The presidency of the republic sincerely laments and rejects the manipulation of President Samper's state-

ments," it said. "It comes as a surprise that a (newspaper) of such prestige ... would attribute to the president of Colombia phrases he never said and that were taken out of context."

Colombia's Congress decides this week whether fresh charges of corruption are enough to merit reopening a probe that could lead to Mr. Samper's impeachment. Prosecutor-General Alfonso Valdivieso formally indicted the president before a special congressional committee Wednesday as part of his office's probe into drug corruption among congressmen and senior public officials.

The House of Representatives Committee of Accusations cleared Mr. Samper in an earlier investigation, citing a lack of evidence on allegations he knew about drug money entering his election campaign. But the 15-member committee will likely be forced to reopen the case after the indictment by Mr. Valdivieso.

## Bangladesh army returns to barracks after elections

DHAKA (R) — The Bangladeshi army has started returning to barracks after being called out to guard voters during last Thursday's general elections, the Election Commission said Monday.

"They are withdrawing now... In fact they have already pulled out in Dhaka," one commission official said.

Thousands of troops were deployed throughout the country, at the request of the commission, to ensure peaceful voting in the election which all major opposition parties boycotted.

But 16 people were killed and 500 wounded in widespread violence that scared off many voters and forced authorities to cancel polling in some places.

Some political analysts said the return of the army indicated Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia was firmly in control even though her bitter foe, Sheikh Hasina of the Awami League, has threatened to force her to hold another election soon.

Army generals ruled Bangladesh for almost 15 years before Mrs. Khaleda took over as the first woman prime minister in 1991 in what were billed as the country's first free and fair elections.

Khaleda's Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) has won 205 out of the seats so far declared and lost only two — one to an independent and the other to a candidate from the National Democratic Alliance.

There are a total of 300 seats. The Election Commission has ordered partial repolling in most of the other constituencies and suspended results in nine to investigate irregularities.

Mrs. Khaleda Sunday denied that her party had seized victory at the polls through irregularities.

"The polls were free and fair," the prime minister told reporters. "Wherever there were problems, they were created by the opposition... to discredit the government."

Mrs. Hasina described Mrs. Khaleda's remarks as "blatant lies" and urged foreign governments not to recognise what she called an illegal administration.

An official estimate of the number of voters was not available yet but Mrs. Khaleda said earlier she would form the next government even if only 10 per cent of the 47.42 million eligible voters cast ballots.







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GEORGE S. HAWATMEH

Editorial and advertising offices:

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### Office breaks no rules

THE OPENING of an office for an Iraqi opposition group in Amman comes as no surprise given the commitment of the government to lend support to any credible and peaceful change in Baghdad. The so-called "National Accord Movement" actually started its campaign to end the suffering of the Iraqi people back in 1991 by encouraging the introduction of a democratic process in their country based on pluralism. The rationale of this movement rests on the incontestable proposition that all the blame for the misfortunes of Iraq lies squarely in the absence of a truly democratic government in Baghdad.

The chain of colossal errors committed by the Saddam regime ever since it allowed itself to enter a devastating 8-year war with Iran ended with an even more catastrophic war in 1990 when Iraqi troops invaded and occupied Kuwait. The fact that millions of Iraqis have suffered dearly throughout the past two decades, on top of the hundreds of thousands who lost their lives on the altar of a medieval dictatorial decision-making process, has proved beyond a shadow of doubt that the panacea to the country and its people lies in a genuine democratic rule.

The promotion of democracy and the protection of human rights anywhere in the world is a duty imposed on all states by international human rights law. Jordan and other countries would be derelict in their international obligations should they choose to stay quiet or indifferent to the denial of even the most basic human rights in Iraq.

Against this backdrop, the opening of an office for an Iraqi opposition group conforms to international norms and can never be regarded as interference in the internal affairs of a neighbouring state. It is a well recognised principle that when it comes to human rights, the international community can exercise jurisdiction over any systematic and gross violations. Likewise, no country may hide behind worn-out and defunct policies of non-interference in domestic affairs of another state when the latter sets no limits on the abuse of human rights.

This being the case, the guest opposition group may not abuse the hospitality of the host country and engage in any other activity that goes beyond the promotion of human rights. Organising an opposition army would therefore appear to go beyond the legitimate mandate of any dissident office. On the other hand, a call for an uprising or a revolt can be viewed as a legitimate function if all peaceful efforts to effect change are exhausted. As the Bosnian situation has amply demonstrated, the international community could also intervene militarily if necessary to halt gross human rights violations.

As long as the "Accord" office in Amman is dedicated to the promotion of pluralistic democracy among the Iraqis by disseminating valuable and true information about their country, then no country including Iraq may claim that Jordan is indirectly involved in a hostile act against its Arab neighbouring country.

### ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

A WRITER for Al Ra'i expressed dismay over the fact that the trade deals between Jordan on the one hand and Israel and the Palestine self-rule areas on the other are not implemented. While Jordan is committed to these agreements and opens its doors for goods coming from the self-rule areas of Palestine, the Kingdom is prevented from exporting goods to the two sides mainly due to the Israeli measures, said Fahd Al Fanek. All goods heading from Jordan to the self-rule areas should, under the present situation, first secure the approval of the Israeli government and thus we can see that in the last eight months of 1995 Jordan imported \$52 million-worth of Palestinian goods and exported a mere \$10 million-worth of national products to the Palestinian markets. The writer said it is regrettable that Jordan, which is totally committed to the deals with the two sides, is unable to persuade the Israelis to open the door for the flow of Jordanian goods westwards. The Jordanian government is deceiving itself by signing agreements that can by no means be implemented and remain ink on paper, he added. The writer demanded a clear statement from the government giving the Jordanian public the facts about the situation as a first step before dealing promptly with this awkward situation.

ANOTHER WRITER for Al Ra'i decried the measures taken by the U.N. Security Council and the American government intended to lay siege to the Arab World. For the mere signing of an American-sponsored agreement to end the strife in the former Yugoslavia, the U.N. Security Council lifted the sanctions on Serbia, said Saleem Al Arar. He said that for five years now the Council has been imposing sanctions on Iraq, depriving its people, and especially women and children, of medicine, food and other essential requirements and is not relenting to please the United States. Furthermore, Washington is now trying to impose sanctions on Sudan and Iran, after imposing sanctions on Libya, because these countries do not accept the American hegemony, said the writer, adding that Arab countries opposed to Iraq have been encouraging the United States to maintain the embargo on the Iraqi people and have aborted any moves to end the sanctions. Disarray in the Arab ranks and the weakness of Arab regimes, he added, have encouraged Eritrea to occupy Yemeni islands in the Red Sea and hostile powers to retain their domination on the Arab countries.

# Spain — the tail wags the dog

By Gwynne Dyer

"I BELIEVE in Jose Barionuevo's innocence," stated Spanish Prime Minister Felipe Gonzalez last month, in a declaration that was (check one):

a) an act of naive stupidity comparable to staying awake to catch the Tooth Fairy;  
b) proof of the adage that thieves must hang together, or else they will hang separately; or,  
c) a case of premeditated electoral suicide.

Spain votes for a few parliament on March 3, and Mr. Gonzalez, already 13 years in power, is seeking a fifth term as prime minister. Jose Barionuevo, who was Gonzalez's minister of the interior in the mid-80s, now faces trial on the charge of having set up a death squad that murdered 27 suspected Basque terrorists — but he is still on the Socialist Party list for this election.

The cover-up about who organised the "Anti-Terrorist Liberation Groups" (GAL) that did the actual killings has been unravelling for five years, and it is Mr. Gonzalez's misfortune that it has reached the level

of former cabinet ministers just as an election looms. But it is also a demonstration of how Basque terrorism constantly shapes Spanish politics.

The few dozen active terrorists of ETA (Basque Land and Liberty) have not only tempted Mr. Gonzalez and his Socialists into morally and legally indefensible policies. They have also primed the popularity of his main rival, Jose Maria Aznar, a terminally uncharismatic former tax inspector, was leading his right-wing People's Party (PP) to its third straight defeat at Mr. Gonzalez's hands until an ETA bomb let him show what he was really made of.

"ETA did, in fact, kill Jose Maria Aznar," said a Madrid journalist after a huge car-bomb just missed Aznar last April. "It killed off the man we all thought we knew." Instead, people saw an unshaken Aznar who emerged from the wreckage covered with cuts, checked that his escorts had survived, and then calmly phoned his family and his office before going for first aid.

The People's Party leaped up the polls 8 per cent in the following week, its seriousness ratified in Spaniards' eyes by ETA's attempt to kill its leader — and it has never lost the lead over the Socialists since. Mr. Gonzalez will almost certainly lose the election, and may well get dragged before the inquiry into the GAL death squads before this year is out.

"Did Mr. Gonzalez know?" asks Frederico Trillo, a senior PP official. "Of course. Back then, he was the owner of his party, the owner of his country. Nobody would have taken a step like this without consulting him."

It is hard to believe otherwise, and Mr. Gonzalez's former associate Ricardo Damborenea, once Socialist leader in the Basque province of Vizcaya and alleged mastermind of GAL, bluntly says that he did know. "There's no doubt. We talked about it on several occasions."

True or false? Put it this way. When Felipe Gonzalez and the Socialists swept into power in Spain in 1982, after decades of Fran-

co's fascist dictatorship and seven years of timid centre-right transitional regimes, he could do no wrong. He did own the place, so there is no excuse. If he truly did not know about the death squads, he is almost as culpable as if he did.

But something is wrong with this picture, for Mr. Gonzalez and his colleagues were not mere thugs, nor were they stupid. How could their government have ended up paying for an illegal "dirty war" carried out by hired assassins for \$15,000 a hit?

Didn't it bother anybody that almost all the murders were being committed in south-western France, on the territory of a friendly and democratic neighbour? (Madrid was trying to destroy ETA's support network in the French Basque provinces). Did it not even bother anyone that fully one-third of the victims were cases of mistaken identity? Evidently not, but why not?

Why is it that the ETA tail so frequently wags the Spanish dog? ETA, after all, has only killed 750 people in its whole history, and

it has been in steep decline for many years.

It had much popular support in the Spanish Basque provinces when it started up in 1968, because the Franco regime tried to crush regional autonomy and expunge the Basque language. But democracy has brought provincial autonomy and linguistic freedom, and only 17 per cent of voters in the three Basque provinces now support ETA front organisations. So how can ETA have such impact on the politics of a country of 40 million people?

Compare it, for example, with the Irish Republican Army (IRA), which launched its present campaign of bombings and assassinations in Northern Ireland and in British cities in the same year. The IRA has caused at least twice as much death and destruction since then, and yet it has not had the slightest discernible effect on the course of British national politics.

What's the difference? It's probably just that the current British political system has the stability and momentum that come from

about 160 years on the same democratic course (since the Reform Bill of 1832, say), while Spain had several civil wars and many dictatorships in the same period, and only returned to democracy 21 years ago. But that does not mean, mercifully, that Spain has to wait another century to be proof against things like ETA.

Indeed, ETA still has such impact on the Spanish political scene only because people who had to deal with it in the shaky, early days of Spanish democracy, when extreme measures in defence of democracy somehow seemed acceptable, are still in power today. ETA lured Mr. Gonzalez's government into a moral morass from which it never escaped. All it can do to subsequent leaders is kill them.

So Mr. Aznar will come to power. Mr. Gonzalez (who has given Spain the confidence that now lets it dump him) may end up in court. And ETA will fade into the irrelevance it so richly merits.

## Euroscepticism grows as governments turn panicky

By Paul Mylrea

Reuter

LONDON — For Britain's Eurosceptics, any concession to the European Union is a step down the slippery slope which leads inexorably to the end of Britain's proud independence and the destruction of its heritage.

Aided and abetted by tabloid newspapers, which delight in apocalyptic stories about EU rules demanding straight bananas, quieter baby rattles and bans on Valentine cards, they have boosted their influence out of all proportion to their numbers.

Taking advantage of the bargaining power Prime Minister John Major's slim majority gives them, the small band of Eurosceptic members of parliament in the ruling Conservatives have forced the government to take an ever tougher line against Brussels.

But citing social unrest in France and economic worries in Germany, they believe European opinion is moving their way.

"There's no doubt at all we're winning the argument because people are seeing that the European Union is a recipe for mass unemployment and the destruction of democracy," Eurosceptic conservative MP Teddy Taylor told Reuters.

"There's been a huge change of opinion in the conservative party in Britain," said Mr. Taylor, one of eight conservative MPs briefly expelled from the parliamentary party over a year ago for defying the government in a key vote on Europe.

"Now it's happening in places like Germany, where people are beginning to have doubts, too," he said. A poll in the newspaper Die Woche Wednesday seemed to bear out Mr. Taylor's vision, showing more than four out of five Germans oppose plans for a single European currency in 1999.

Analysts agree that Euroscepticism — by whatever name it is known by — is growing more vocal across Europe.

"Europe has been created by an elite and all of a sudden, since the Maastricht treaty, Europe has become a popular and populist issue," said Alain Guyomarch, deputy director of the European Institute at the London School of Economics.

"But the problem, which (European governments) haven't been able to solve, is unemployment and the man in the street doesn't

see any advantage to being part of Europe," he said.

But Mr. Guyomarch told Reuters Euroscepticism is not a cohesive movement and strength of feeling varies.

Some southern states remain relatively untouched.

In Spain, where there are no strong anti-European political groups, a January poll by the State Statistics Bureau (CIS) found just over 57 per cent wanted a united currency and nearly half believed what was good for Europe was good for their country.

All parties in Italy, the current EU president, are broadly Euro-friendly, although worries over monetary union are growing.

tent political animal. The closest the Dutch have come to concern have been mildly voiced warnings that the social impact of integration must be weighed along with financial benefits.

Euroscepticism is also muted in Portugal, which receives 2.0 billion escudos (\$13 million) of EU funds every day.

The ruling Socialists and the main opposition Social Democrats are wholeheartedly committed to Europe and polls still show the majority of Portuguese are pro-European.

Even in new EU member Finland, there is broad satisfaction with union after a year of membership, although fears are growing as Finland faces a possible

approving it in a second plebiscite the following year, the Social Democrat-led ruling coalition is officially pro-European.

In private, however, many Social Democrats oppose closer European political union.

Commentators say Germany and France will decide the future of monetary union and of the bloc itself.

In Germany, despite the polls showing opposition to a single currency, most people are squarely pro-European, partly as a reaction to the nationalism gone wrong of Nazism, and have few qualms about delegating some powers to Brussels.

There have been only two German political movements of note which have tried to campaign on a Eurosceptical platform.

The far-right Republicans have faded from the scene in the last few years since immigration became less of an issue.

And a new party, the "Alliance of Free Citizens", created by Manfred Brunner, former top aide to European Commissioner Martin Bangemann, to rally Eurosceptic opinion for elections to the European Parliament in 1994 failed to win any seats.

But in France, where recent industrial unrest highlighted public concern at the social cost of economic efforts to meet the criteria for a single currency, Philippe Seguin, speaker of the national assembly, leads what is dubbed an "anti-Maastricht" front.

Defying the leadership of his Gaullist Rpr Party, he led a campaign against the Maastricht treaty in a 1992 referendum, coming within a whisker of turning voters against the union.

There are also critics in the far-right National Front, in the Communist Party and in the left wing of the Socialist Party, as well as some in the centre-right majority, worried at threats to French products like cheese and wine as well as jobs.

Analysts say the future of the European Union depends on the political will of governments to face up to the Eurosceptics.

"It's often been the case that people have hidden behind Britain's anti-European rhetoric. But unless a number of big states now work together, it just won't happen," said Juliet Lodge, professor of European studies at Leeds University.

### LETTERS

#### Equal rights again

To the Editor:

I AGREE fully with Abia Amawi (letter to the editor, Jordan Times, Feb. 19, 1996).

I too am a Jordanian married to a non-Jordanian and have to deal with residency permits for my daughter and husband. I was married here. My daughter was born here and yet she does not belong here. I even had to pay a fine at the airport for not having a permit issued for her during the first three months after her birth.

I think it is about time that the new democracy applies to both sexes, to be able to really be a true democracy.

R. Ridolfo,  
Amman.

#### Credit where it is due

To the Editor:

I AM sure that you frequently receive letters criticising our institutions. Unhappily, very rarely do we speak out in praise of a job well done.

Almost nine years ago now, Nabeeh, my then six year old boy, walked in from school in a very excited state. He and other school children had had a very unusual and unique visit that day. Someone from the National Music Conservatory (NMC) had paid a visit and auditioned them for their aptitude to learn music. Nabeeh brought in a slip stating that he was one of three children chosen, and would be interested in teaching him music at the NMC which Noor Al Hussein Foundation had just started to sponsor? We decided we were interested and since then, and after three different sizes of violins and two ouds, Nabeeh has been in the conservatory, spending almost fifteen hours a week on music instruction.

As a parent who was one of the earliest to have had the honour of dealing with this innovative Jordanian institution, I feel it is our duty to let the Jordanian public learn more about it and what it has come to mean to us and more importantly to Nabeeh.

After a small, but ambitious start, with only a handful of dedicated teachers and a small but adequate space, the NMC enabled the children to have a new way of violin instruction and had them participate in numerous festivals.

The fact that Her Majesty Queen Noor attended many of their performances was a source of pride and encouragement.

With time, the number of students increased, as did the number of instruments taught. Children not only receive instruction in instrument playing techniques, they are also taught music history, theory and reading. Their orchestra ensemble is often given the chance to play under the direction of internationally recognised conductors.

As parents, we measure the success of a teaching place through the accomplishment of our children. The temptation is always great to attribute that success to the child himself. But credit is due not only to the innate talent. The instructors play an even bigger role and I would like to mention here the director of the NMC, Kifah Fakhouri, who must be commended for his high level of professionalism and untiring dedication.

I think it is only fair to thank all the hard working people at the NMC. We hope they will continue their effort in the same manner and with the same enthusiasm, realising that we, as parents, cannot thank them enough.

Our deepest gratitude, however, will have to be addressed to Queen Noor, without whose support and vision this wonderful endeavour would have never been possible.

Najwa Khuri-Bulos, M.D.  
Professor, Department of Paediatrics  
Jordan University Hospital,  
Amman.

The Jordan Times welcomes letters and contributions from its readers on any subject they wish to tackle. Letters intended for publication, however, should contain the writer's full name and preferably address as well. Names can be withheld only upon request and under special circumstances. Letters are subject to editing. The newspaper is not responsible for the return of unused manuscripts.



# Features

## Freed Serb prisoners tell of hell in Muslim prisons

By Guy Dimmore  
Reuters

SARAJEVO — Serb prisoners of war released under the Dayton peace agreement speak of a living hell in Muslim-controlled prisons where inmates died from executions, forced labour on front-lines, beatings and starvation.

Like Muslims who endured the horrors of Serb detention camps and mass executions in far bigger numbers, former Serb prisoners also demand justice from the U.N. war crimes tribunal and see no possibility of reconciliation and co-existence in Bosnia.

"I was the last of 44 to leave Tarcin prison on January 27. I was doing cleaning when they told me to go," said Radovan Cancarevic, beginning an account of his three years and eight months in captivity.

Looking haggard and much older than his 41 years, Mr. Cancarevic said one of the worst moments came one day in April, 1993, when three fellow prisoners escaped while being forced to dig trenches on the front-line near Sarajevo.

"The prison guards were so angry that they shot dead three other prisoners on the spot. I was in the group. I saw it," said Mr. Cancarevic, naming the three dead men as Ranko Varagic, Milan Krstic and Slavica Kapetina.

"Our hands were bound with wire and we dug trenches like that. If one prisoner was wounded then another took his place," Mr. Cancarevic said, recalling how his friend Dane Cicic was killed by a Serb shell. Four others in the group lost limbs during nine days and nights on the front line under Muslim guard.

Nenad Lojanica, 44, said he and Mr. Cancarevic were both civilians when they were taken from their homes in a village near Tarcin, just outside Sarajevo, by Bosnian government forces on May 13, 1992. About half of the 500 Serbs rounded up were badly beaten and they ate nothing for 52 hours, he said.

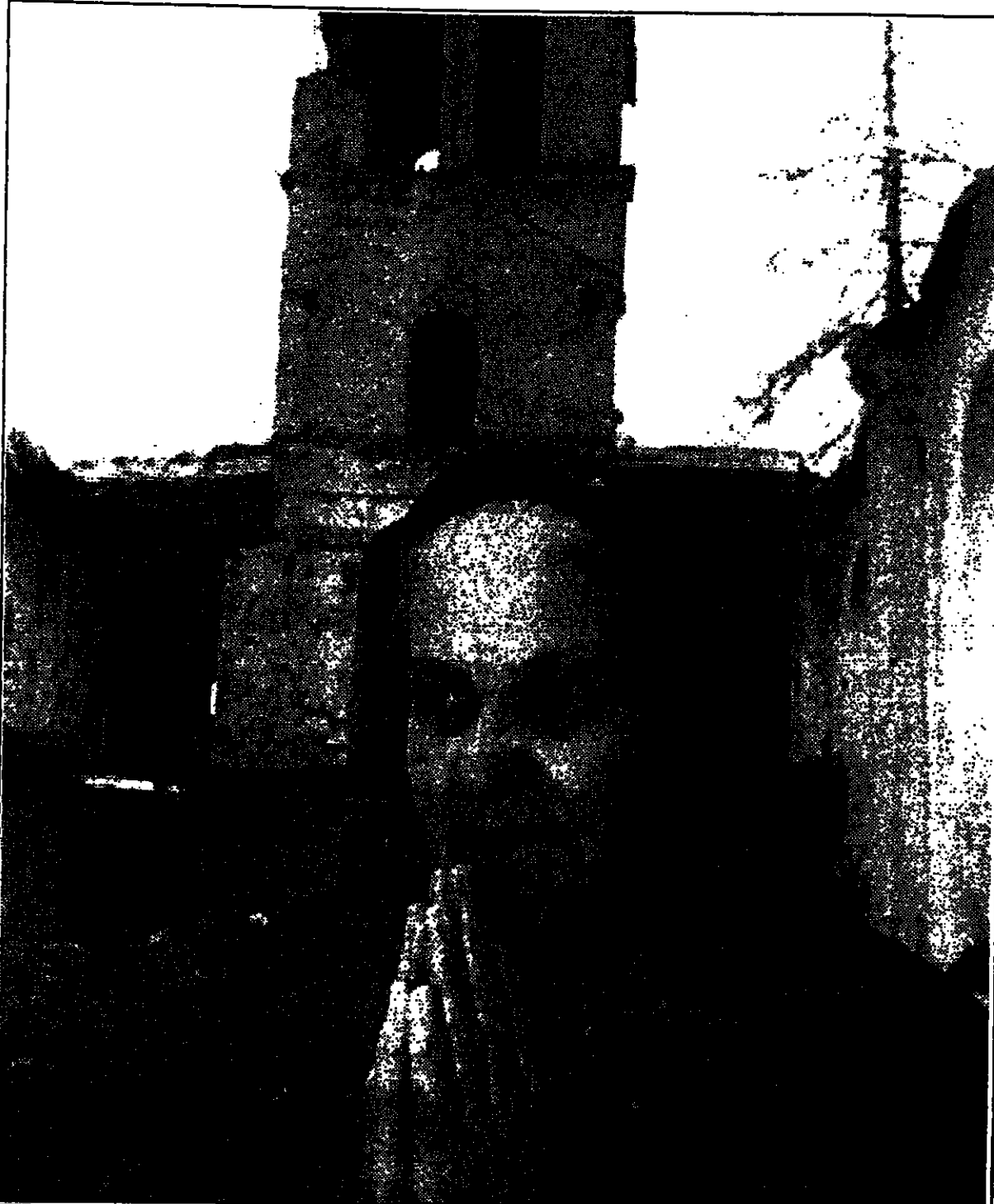
"After that we had one piece of bread, the size of a cigarette packet, a day and half a litre of salt water for six people... We slept on concrete without blankets," he said.

He named three prisoners who died in that period, including one who was 83 years old. "Then in November the Red Cross came and put us on their lists. We got their rations every second day for one month. It was a good time."

Mr. Lojanica was later transferred to Krupa prison where he was sent in a group of 30 to dig trenches on the front-line in Hrasnica. "Eighteen came back. One escaped, some were killed by shells or snipers. We were in civilian clothes and had no uniforms to show we were prisoners."

Both men, speaking over brandy and coffee in a farmhouse in Serb-held southern Sarajevo, said conditions vastly improved after the signing in December of the Bosnian peace accord brokered by the United States in Dayton, Ohio.

A third Serb, who asked only that his initials B.G. be used, spoke of



A Bosnian Catholic woman prays in a destroyed church of Sarajevo's frontline district of Stup (Reuters photo)

the horrors of the government-run prison of Celebici near Konjic, south of Sarajevo.

"There was mental and physical torture. They burned my legs. We had to drink our urine. They stripped us naked in the rain on the front-line. The Muslim soldiers sat on our backs in the trenches so as not to dirty their shoes," he said.

He said 18 prisoners died in his group, two were shot, the rest through exhaustion and beatings. He gave the names of nine.

After the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) visited their prison and interviewed the inmates the Muslim guards beat them and stole ICRC food parcels, B.G. said.

Although free, the three men still fear for their lives as, under the Dayton pact, their homes will come under full control of former enemies, the Muslim-Croat Federation, on March 20.

The three men's accounts may be

hard to verify independently as many witnesses are dead or missing. All three said they were willing to talk to the International War Crimes Tribunal for former Yugoslavia in the Hague and wanted asylum abroad.

So far the U.N. Tribunal has indicted 52 Serbs and Croats for war crimes but no Muslims, a spokeswoman said. "We never talk about our investigations. We look at all parties," she added.

Observers of the 3-1/2 year Bosnian war say indictments so far reflect the weight of evidence of atrocities committed by Serb forces who laid siege to Sarajevo and had the military upper-hand until NATO began air strikes last August 30.

Serb "President" Radovan Karadzic and army commander Ratko Mladic have been indicted by the tribunal for crimes against humanity, including orchestrating the mass slaughter of Muslims in the U.N.-designated "safe area" of

Srebrenica last July.

Srebrenica's entire Muslim population was either expelled or died in ambushes and mass executions. The ICRC says 8,000 Muslim men are still missing from the eastern enclave.

Human rights envoy John Shattuck said last month in a visit to suspected mass graves near Srebrenica that justice was a precondition for reconciliation in a post-war united Bosnia.

But based on interviews with Muslims and Serbs, who suffered the worst prison conditions Europe has seen since the Nazi concentration camps of World War II, "justice" will never be enough.

"I can't stay here in Bosnia. I had such a bad experience. I don't believe in life together with those people again," B.G. said bitterly.

"Those police and soldiers were war criminals. I'd like to be the judge myself. Killing them with a bullet would be too good for them," said Mr. Cancarevic.

## Early learning can raise IQ 'by 30 points'

### Academics boost claims of the effects of nurture over nature and warn of 'trickle-down' dangers

By Tom Wilkie  
Science Editor

INTENSIVE PRE-school tuition can halve the incidence of mental retardation among the poorest and most deprived children.

The most vulnerable children can show gains in intellectual performance of between 15 and 30 IQ points, according to Dr. Craig Ramey, of the University of Alabama.

But help has to be given fast. "Intervening at the kindergarten stage has only a minuscule effect, compared to intervening in the first year of life," he warned.

Dr. Ramey said best results came from remedial programmes which began with babies as young as six weeks. There appeared to be a

critical stage in the development of children's brains where, if they received the right environmental stimulation, the beneficial effects would last throughout life.

Dr. Ramey was speaking at the annual meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science in Baltimore.

The evidence that environmental stimulation could improve IQ and cut the incidence of mental retardation refutes the fashionable view that intelligence is innate, fixed by the genes, and cannot be altered significantly by teaching.

"There is now substantial evidence that intellectual development is malleable in the positive sense. Early experience is critical for full devel-

opment of intellectual capacity," Dr. Ramey said.

Professor Christine Hohmann, of Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, warned the meeting: "We have to be cautious not to ascribe too much of behaviour to genetics. Genes cannot act independently of their environment."

Studies of brain development in animals also show an interaction between genes and the environment. According to Dr. Joanne Berger-Sweeney, of Wellesley College, Massachusetts, if a young animal is under stress, that "can impact on its genes and how they are expressed and the way the animal will behave throughout its life."

The evidence for the benefits of early help for children had been

borne out in more than 20 studies, Dr. Ramey said, involving more than 1,000 children. However, Dr. Ramey conceded that the intensive programme he had devised could cost \$10,000 a year.

This is twice as much as the controversial "Headstart" programmes set up to try and cut juvenile delinquency in some U.S. cities. Dr. Ramey said his programme started much earlier — at six weeks rather than four years — lasted longer each day and for more of the year, and used highly professional teachers.

But Professor Joseph Graves, of Arizona State University, recalled an old saying: "If you think education is expensive then you should see the price of ignorance," he said.

## Novel Italian electric plant looks to the

By Malcolm Whittaker  
Reuters

SERRE, Italy — "This could be the great energy hope of the future," said Roberto Vigotti, pointing to ranks of slate-grey panels glinting eerily in the weak winter sunlight of southern Italy like a huge space-age mirror.

Mr. Vigotti, a fast-talking, intense man with a vision, is the scientist in charge of research into renewable energy sources at Italy's state electricity giant Enel.

"Solar energy systems are eco-friendly — clean, simple, silent and need little upkeep. It is the solution of the future for the third world's two billion people," he said.

Serre, 25 km inland from Salerno, is the site of a 35 billion lire (\$22 million) solar electricity generating plant which is the biggest of its kind in the world.

Built in just two years, the three megawatt plant covers seven hectares and uses a process of photovoltaic (PV) conversion for a maximum output of five million kilowatt-hours (KWh) a year, enough to supply the energy needs of 8,000 domestic consumers.

Solar systems using the sun's heat to warm domestic water are not new. But the photovoltaic system is a different process whereby photons from the sun collide with electrons in silicon panels, pushing electrical energy along wires.

"You will always need conventional power in a city, but the beauty of PV is that it can be set up in the most inaccessible places, on islands, up mountains and in deserts," Mr. Vigotti said.

The PV system, however, is costly if compared to conventional electricity generation using coal, oil, gas or

nuclear power. Electricity produced by pv costs about 800 lire (50 U.S. cents) per KWh against an average 80 lire (5 U.S. cents)/kwh using conventional means, and 40 lire (2.5 cents)/kwh for that produced by French nuclear plants.

"It is not fair to compare costs, which in pv plants are all at the start-up stage due to the price of the modules. PV energy is produced at the point of use and so avoids distribution and transmission costs. And costs will come down as demand increases," Mr. Vigotti said.

Expected costs for further plants based on the Serre experience see a drop to 550 lire (30 U.S. cents)/kwh.

Enel, the world's second largest electricity generating company after France's EDF, is linking up some 50 Italian homes a year to PV solar power.

"Sure, it's a small business, a niche market, but the possibilities are boundless," Mr. Vigotti said. "Look at rooftop panels, they can be in any colour to blend in with surroundings. For a normal home you might have an initial outlay of about 50 million lire (\$31,350), but then it doesn't cost anything apart from a change of batteries every seven years," he explained.

Michael Grubb, in charge of energy and the environment at Britain's Royal Institute of International Affairs, said the PV process could well be viable in isolated Third World conditions.

"PV is certainly useful on individual buildings but can't compete with big generating centres," he told Reuters.

Italy produces some 11 MW a year of PV-generated electricity compared with about 40,000 MW of conventional power. "PV is still a toy at this stage, we are really pygmies. But by 2010 it will be big business. We just need more impetus at the European Union level to pool resources and create a market," Mr. Vigotti said.

## NASA's cheap, thrilling rendezvous with asteroid Eros

By Marcia Dunn  
The Associated Press

CAPE CANAVERAL, Florida — It promises to be one of NASA's cheapest thrills ever in outer space — a rendezvous with Eros.

That's the 433 Eros, an asteroid named after the Greek god of love that's circling the sun relatively close to Earth. Recently, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) will try to launch a sale-priced spacecraft the size of a golf cart on a three-year, 2 billion-kilometre journey to the asteroid. It is believed to be twice the size of Manhattan and packing a catastrophic punch if it ever crosses paths with Earth.

It will be the first spacecraft to orbit an asteroid, the rocky leftovers of the birth of the solar system 4.6 billion years ago.

The probe, dubbed NEAR for Near Earth Asteroid Rendezvous, is expected to slip into Eros' orbit in February 1999, just before Valentine's Day, and scrutinise the surface and even the interior of the asteroid for almost one year.

"We're going somewhere that we have never gone before. We're doing things that have never been done before, principally orbiting an asteroid," said project scientist Andrew Cheng of the Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory in Laurel, Maryland.

The Near spacecraft should offer scientists "the first really good, close-up look at an object which may preserve materials dating all the way back to the

origins of our solar system, to the time when the planets, including earth, were first forming," Mr. Cheng said.

Scientists do not know whether Eros is a primitive celestial body that never formed into a planet or a chunk of a ruptured, former planet.

From February 1999 through December 1999, NEAR will fly as close as 16 kilometres to the potato-shaped Eros, estimated to be 40 kilometres long, 14.5-kilometres wide and 14.5 kilometres deep. The five major science instruments on the spacecraft will determine the mass, density and composition of the asteroid and, possibly, detect any moons if they're there.

Besides shedding light on the origins of the solar system, NEAR also should contribute to the controversial area of collision avoidance — how to keep Earth from being clobbered and possibly wiped out by an asteroid.

Some scientists theorise that an impact 65 million years ago by an asteroid or comet much smaller than Eros led to the extinction of dinosaurs. And in 1908, an even smaller asteroid or comet exploded over Siberia, destroying thousands of square miles of forest. Although Eros is currently no threat to Earth — the closest approach this century was in 1975 at about 22.5 million kilometres — its orbit could alter enough in 1 million years to pose a threat.

"If there were ever a collision, it would truly be a catastrophe," Mr. Cheng said.

Scientists involved in the NEAR

mission chose Eros because of its proximity and size — it's the second-largest of the approximately 250 known near-Earth asteroids, those with orbits bringing them within 195 million kilometres of the sun. In addition, Eros likely is related to one of the most interesting kinds of meteorites found on Earth.

Discovered in 1898, Eros is an S-type or silicate-based asteroid, the most common type inhabiting the inner-region of the asteroid belt orbiting the sun between Mars and Jupiter. Countless thousands of asteroids — so-called minor planets — are clustered in this belt, ranging from the size of pebbles all the way up to hundreds of kilometres in diameter.

Two of these main-belt asteroids, Gaspra and Ida, were photographed in the early 1990s by NASA's Galileo probe, then en route to Jupiter. Galileo passed within 1,000 1,600 kilometres of Gaspra and 2,400 kilometres of Ida, whetting the appetites of the NEAR scientists.

As a bonus, NEAR will fly by the much larger asteroid Mathilde in June 1997, possibly collecting data from that asteroid 1,200 kilometres away. One week later, the main thruster on NEAR will fire, sending the spacecraft back toward Earth for a gravity assist needed to change its orbital plane and line up with Eros.

Mr. Cheng and his team are considering crash-landing NEAR on Eros at the end of its mission in December 1999.

which would provide even closer-up views of the asteroid.

NASA has to launch NEAR by Feb. 26 or the opportunity to fly by Mathilde will be lost. What's more, NEAR has to be on its way by March 2 or the Eros rendezvous will have to be scrapped. In that case, another asteroid would be chosen and the launch rescheduled for next year.

Perhaps just as important as its science, NEAR ushers in NASA's discovery programme, touted as a cheaper, faster and — supposedly — better way of exploring the solar system. The programme limits spacecraft costs to \$150 million and development to three years.

Johns Hopkins developed NEAR for NASA for \$122 million in a little over two years. Toss in its launch on an unmanned Delta rocket and four years of mission operations and the cost jumps to \$223 million, still a bargain compared to NASA's \$1 billion-plus scientific behemoths of recent years, most notably the Hubble space telescope and Galileo, launched with crippling defects, and the Mars observer, which simply vanished.

NASA's space science chief, Wesley Huntress Jr., said NEAR will cost less than one-third of the cheapest U.S. planetary mission to date.

The second in the discovery series, the not-quite \$300 million Mars Pathfinder, is to be launched in December at less than 10 per cent of the cost of NASA's last Mars landing-mission in 1976.



## Higher oil prices and reforms slash deficit of GCC states in '95

ABU DHABI (AFP) — Higher oil prices and a decision by six Arab Gulf states to put a brake on government spending slashed their 1995 budget deficit to its lowest level, bankers have said.

The combined 1995 budget deficit of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) had been projected at around \$9.6 billion but by the end of the year the actual shortfall was nearly halved, the bankers said.

"Figures obtained from government circles in four Gulf states showed their budget deficits were either slashed or wiped out," a Gulf banker said.

"Even if the deficit of the two other GCC members remained unchanged, a simple calculation showed the combined shortfall was cut by nearly half."

Saudi Arabia, the world's top oil producer and exporter, had forecast a budget deficit of 15 billion Saudi riyals (\$4 billion) in 1995 but

the actual shortfall stood at eight billion riyals (\$2.13 billion) at the end of the year, according to Saudi bankers.

Oman has reported a budget surplus in the first half of 1995 and officials said they expected the actual gap for the whole of the year to disappear.

Preliminary figures showed the deficit at the end of the year was non-existent because of higher oil revenues and a decision to stick to spending levels, said Mahmoud Jarwani, director of the Muscat Stock Exchange.

Oman, a small non-OPEC oil producer, had estimated a deficit of \$800 million when it released its budget at the start of 1995. Previous budget deficits were shored up through domestic borrowing and the state reserve fund.

In the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Emirates Today magazine cited official figures as showing a projected deficit of \$290 million

turned into a surplus at the end of 1995 due to an improvement in oil prices and reductions in expenditure through the year. But it gave no figures.

The deficit in Qatar, a small OPEC member, was expected to be slashed from its forecast level of \$300 million, bankers said.

"Considering that the deficits in Kuwait and Bahrain remained, then the actual GCC shortfall is estimated at around \$5.5 billion. This is the lowest budget deficit ever recorded in the group's history," one banker said.

GCC states, which created their political, defence and economic alliance in 1981, usually base their annual budgets on an oil price of as low as \$14-15 to guard against sudden fluctuations.

The average prices of OPEC's basket of seven crude oil stood at around \$16.8 in 1995 compared with \$15.5 in 1994. The \$1.3 increase

boosted the oil income of the six members by around \$6 billion to nearly \$76 billion in 1995, according to economic experts.

Most GCC states have started to exercise restraint in spending in reforms to restore balance to their economies damaged by weak crude prices over the past decade. Other reforms include privatisation, developing different income sources and attracting capital.

Spending was cut to \$68.7 billion in 1995, one of its lowest levels in 10 years. It stood at \$71.4 billion in 1994 and as high as \$124 billion in 1991, when member states paid over \$60 billion to finance a U.S.-led offensive to eject Iraqi invasion forces from Kuwait.

The high spending in 1991 pushed the actual budget deficit in the GCC to a record \$62 billion, of which around \$33 billion were attributed to Saudi Arabia.

## Saudi oil income seen lower in 1996

ABU DHABI (AFP) — Saudi Arabia is expected to earn less from its oil exports in 1996 as excess supplies in the world market will depress crude prices, a Saudi bank study said Monday.

The price of Saudi Arabia's light crude is projected to average \$14.75 this year compared with \$15.5 in 1995, according to the study by Henry Azzam, chief economist at the National Commercial Bank.

"Oil prices began the year with a strong trend due to a sharp growth in demand for heating fuel and a decline in stockpiles in the West," said the study, published in the United Arab Emirates daily Al Khaleej.

"But prices will likely start retreating after the first few months of 1996 as there is a surplus in the global market," the study pointed out. Saudi Arabia, the world's top oil power, produces around eight million barrels per day (b/d), of which nearly seven million b/d are exported.

Light crude will account for the bulk of those exports as ARAMCO, which controls the kingdom's energy sector, is seeking to boost the sale of such crudes at the expense of heavy crudes, Mr. Azzam said.

The export of light crude will narrow the gap between the prices of Saudi oil and those of North Sea Brent to \$1.25 after Brent was higher by at least \$1.5 last year, he added.

Mr. Azzam gave no figures on Saudi oil earnings, which surged by nearly 10 per cent of their level in 1994. Total revenues, which come mainly from crude exports, were projected at \$36 billion in 1995 but bankers said they could have touched \$40 billion due to the price improvement.

The current oil income of Saudi Arabia is less than half its earnings in 1981, when crude prices were nearly double their present level.

## Japan's trade surplus contracts 83% in January

TOKYO (AFP) — Japan's trade surplus slumped by 83 per cent to \$467 million in January on a 12-monthly comparison owing to a surge of imports from the United States and Asia, the finance ministry said Monday.

This was the smallest surplus for January for six years. Analysts and officials said that but for a surge of exports which had followed a sharp drop caused by the Kobe earthquake in January 1995, the balance would have shown a deficit.

Ministry officials said the figures showed a continuing decline of the 12-monthly surplus for the seventh successive month reflecting a strong rise of imports driven by imports of finished products.

The January figures proved that Japan's "trade surplus (problem) is steadily being resolved," said Peter Morgan, senior economist for James Capel Pacific.

The finance ministry trade data on a customs-cleared basis, which does not include broader measures such as services, showed that the surplus had shrunk by 83 per cent from the figure a year earlier, and was sharply down from \$10.95 billion in December.

Exports rose by 6.7 per cent to \$28.956 billion, while imports grew by 16.9 per cent to \$28.489 billion.

Foreign exchange dealers said that investors who had been buying dollars turned sellers immediately after release of the data but that domestic institutional investors had given support at 104.85 yen level.

Before the figures were published the dollar had firmed to 105.23 yen, and was being quoted at about 105.02 in afternoon trading.

"The dollar's fall was in part exaggerated by rumours that Japan's trade surplus will turn to deficits with some countries in coming months," a Japanese bank dealer said.

Analysts were reluctant to forecast any abrupt descent into deficit, but were generally positive that the trend was for smaller surpluses.

"There is no turning back, especially in terms of car parts, where the traded surplus is fading very quickly with the United States for instance and may run into deficit in the not too distant future," said Brian Rose of S.G. Warburg.

Japan's politically-sensitive trade surplus with the United States fell by 5.12 per cent to \$1.55 billion in January, the biggest decline for that month for 16 years and the eighth consecutive monthly decline.

Exports fell by 2.9 per cent to \$7.99 billion while imports jumped by 27.5 per cent to \$6.44 billion.

The surplus with Asia edged down by 1.1 per cent to \$1.61 billion.

The surplus in January was the smallest since January 1990, and was also the sharpest 12-monthly decline since that month, the ministry said.

"Without the rebound in exports over the sharp drop following the earthquake (a year ago), we might have had a much smaller surplus in January, and cannot rule out that Japan posted a deficit in January, hypothetically," he said.

Another official said that import volume increases have steadily surpassed export growth for more than two-and-a-half years and "with the progress in Japan's economic reforms, the surplus is expected to fall further."

## Israel pins high hopes on trade accord with European Union

BRUSSELS (Agencies) — Israel hopes it will reap great benefits from the trade and cooperation deal it signed last year with the European Union (EU), Efraim Halevy, the country's new ambassador to the EU said Monday.

"This accord is of extreme importance to us because in addition to the political aspects... the core is economic," he told a news conference.

"It will enable us to improve in large measure the economic prosperity in Israel and economic relations between the European Union and Israel," he said.

Mr. Halevy, a career diplomat with postings in Paris and Washington interspersed with spells in the prime ministers office and at the National Defence College, took up his new position at the end of January.

He said it was vital to rebalance the trade relationship between the two that had grown from an EU trade surplus with Israel of 59 million European currency units (\$74.3 million) in 1980 to one of 4.8 billion European Currency Units (\$6.08 billion) in 1994.

"We must do everything in our power to increase our exports to the European Union, and this accord will enable us to do that," Mr. Halevy said.

He said he was pleased that the EU had become more deeply involved in the Middle East peace process since the 27-nation Barcelona conference last November that launched the idea of a Euro-Med free trade area within the next 15 years.

He also welcomed Syria's proposal to open trade and cooperation talks with the EU, and said that everything that helped underpin the peace process and Israel's own talks with Damascus was vital.

"This is an important straw in the wind for us," he said, adding that one way to combat extremism and help the Middle East peace process was to improve the living standards, aspirations and wealth of the population in the region.

Mr. Halevy stressed that the EU must not overstep the mark in talks on a new relationship with the Palestinian Authority.

It could not, he said, negotiate or sign any agreement that even hinted at the idea that the Palestinian Authority had international standing.

Mr. Halevy said Israel and the Palestinian Authority would begin talks in May on

the future status of the authority, and that until these had been completed the EU must tread very carefully.

"No agreement can go beyond what has already been agreed between Israel and the Palestinian Authority," he stressed.

He said he had no fear that the EU would become so distracted by its diplomatic and economic initiatives in Central Europe, Asia, South Africa, the United States and Central and Latin America that it would lose interest in the Middle East.

"Europe has always been linked politically, economically and militarily to what is happening in the eastern reaches of the Mediterranean," Mr. Halevy said.

Meanwhile, Israel's central bank governor said Monday that for Israel to sustain economic growth, it must reduce its inflation rate to between three per cent and four per cent by the end of the decade.

Jacob Frenkel, governor of the Bank of Israel, said the new government that will be elected in May should set multi-year goals for reducing government spending, the deficit, and inflation.

Dr. Frenkel urged the government to accelerate liberalisation and reform programmes, including selling government corporations and removal of foreign exchange controls.

By the end of the decade, if inflation is lowered, Israel will have "conditions which will enable us to abolish all foreign exchange controls in Israel," he said.

Inflation dropped to 8.1 per cent in 1995, down from 14.5 per cent the year before, and unemployment fell to six per cent from 7.8 per cent.

But Dr. Frenkel said there was "one important cloud on the horizon" — the government's balance-of-payments deficit. That deficit swelled to \$4.2 billion in 1995, up from \$2.5 billion in 1994, he said.

The government needs to reduce government spending and taxes and encourage growth in the national savings rate, he said.

**THE BETTER HALF.** By Glasbergen

"We are home, but we're busy arguing over who's going to answer the phone. Please leave a message."

**JUMBLE.** THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME by Heidi Arnold and Mike Argillon

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

NOGGI  
DOREL  
TARIBB  
TIPEOA

Answer:     OF     (Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday's Jumbles: DAILY VENOM DONKEY HELMET  
Answer: What the locksmith made when business was slow — A "KEY" MOVE

**THE Daily Crossword by Joan D. Berbrich**

**ACROSS**

- 1 Rumanian coins
- 5 Be the equal of
- 10 —Magnon
- 13 Representative
- 15 Skirt shape
- 16 By what means
- 17 Underwear
- 20 Prime rib, e.g.
- 21 Put on guard
- 23 Defensible
- 26 Ike's command
- 27 Sixth sense
- 30 Pair
- 31 Hit review
- 33 Sanctify
- 36 Bunyan's tool
- 38 Earn
- 41 IQ man
- 42 Clinch
- 43 Shady garden spot
- 44 Gaze
- 45 Old seaman
- 46 Gem
- 47 Branch
- 49 Oil well gear
- 51 Totem pole
- 52 Dep.
- 53 Stock of weapons
- 57 Silhouette of buildings
- 59 Songlike
- 63 Taxi
- 64 Source of many troubles
- 67 From — Z
- 68 Scornful expression
- 69 Robe of old Rome
- 70 "Oedipus" —
- 71 Alleviated
- 72 Gave the impression of being

**DOWN**

- 1 Innocent one
- 2 Literary conflict
- 3 Nearest
- 4 Lethargic
- 5 Stadium cry
- 6 Workmen's gp.
- 7 Kind of pneumonia
- 8 Elk feature
- 9 — majesty
- 10 Non-stop talker
- 11 Western show
- 12 Was indebted
- 14 Orange or lemon
- 18 Mailed
- 22 Backslide
- 24 Anticipate
- 25 Freight train units
- 27 Recedes
- 28 Gash
- 29 Ice hockey area
- 32 Amo, —, amat
- 34 Soap opera, for one
- 35 Curb
- 37 Weird
- 39 Scottish island
- 40 Waste
- 41 allowance
- 48 Top — (head)
- 50 Growl
- 52 Kerrigan item
- 54 Magritte and Clair
- 55 Macaws
- 56 Tilt
- 57 Duel memento
- 58 — doct
- 60 Reed instrument.
- 61 Flat fish
- 62 Test
- 65 Low grade
- 66 Certain number: abbr.

**Puzzle solved:**

NOSH MEDIA CAVE  
ASHE EXERT ABED  
STAY SCATTERING  
AIT ICER SEEDY  
LATERAL SETS  
ELAL STRESSED  
SERIN PARIS MAO  
ALIE MOVIE VASE  
FAN AESOP SATYR  
ENGINEER DINT  
NETS CAREENS  
ABYSS WANE ROT  
SPATTERING MINE  
COLE MARNE ONCE  
HEEP SPEAR AGED

**Peanuts**

**Andy Capp**

**Mutt'n'Jeff**

**HOROSCOPE**

FORECAST FOR TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 1996

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Wright Astrological Foundation

**ARIES:** (March 21 to April 19) Get busy making collections, payments and reports during the daytime today and be conscientious tonight in home affairs.

**TAURUS:** (April 20 to May 20) Be sure to compromise with an associate who is as stubborn as you and come to a firm understanding so that you can be very successful in your duties.

**GEMINI:** (May 21 to June 21) You have many duties ahead of you today, so concentrate on them and don't try to take on more responsibilities than you can possibly handle.

**MOON CHILDREN:** (June 22 to July 21) Some recreation you were relying on may have to be put off until a better time today, so don't let this bother you in some activities.

**LEO:** (July 22 to August 21) Much stress is possible at home today if you do not take a more patient stance and be more understanding towards your mate for greater harmony.

**VIRGO:** (August 22 to September 22) This is a good day for communicating with others in an ideal way, so contact them and get much accomplished. Avoid problems which could exist.

**LIBRA:** (September 23 to October 22) You want to commit yourself to some practical matter today, but this is not the right time or day for that or there will not be any success.

**SCORPIO:** (October 23 to November 21) Don't try to be forceful if you can't get conditions moving as you would like today, but be patient and postpone towards the completion of a task.

**SAGITTARIUS:** (November 22 to December 21) You may have a private worry which would keep you fretting if you permit today to get busy at whatever is practical and accomplish a good deal instead. Be kind.

**CAPRICORN:** (December 22 to January 20) Concentrate on making right plans for whatever it is you have had in mind for some time to come. Socialize with young people.

**AQUARIUS:** (January 21 to February 19) Be prepared to answer questions which highlight put to you and come up with flying colours today, improving your career thereby.

**PISCES:** (February 20 to March 20) You had better get more information before you take on that new interest which appeals to you today and then you can be successful.

**HOROSCOPE**

FORECAST FOR WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 21, 1996

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Wright Astrological Foundation

**ARIES:** (March 21 to April 19) You understand how to expand in your interests in the morning, and later today you can get right at them and solve problems.

**TAURUS:** (April 20 to May 20) This morning is fine for going after your personal ambitions and gaining them in a successful manner, but later do not be forceful towards any associates.

**GEMINI:** (May 21 to June 21) Get into the bustling business world early and get a good deal accomplished, but safeguard your reputation against negative situations.

**MOON CHILDREN:** (June 22 to July 21) You get fine ideas in the morning today and should carry through with them vigorously since later the aspects are not satisfactory.

**LEO:** (July 22 to August 21) You can improve your romantic life in the morning today, by doing something thoughtful for the one you love and the reaction will be reciprocated.

**VIRGO:** (August 22 to September 22) Using more modern mechanisms where your career activities are concerned can save time and energy today and gain you greater efficiency.

**LIBRA:** (September 23 to October 22) You may get an invitation early in the morning today, which should be accepted and later clear up any blockage in your capabilities.

**SCORPIO:** (October 23 to November 21) Endeavour to find some way of establishing greater harmony at home today in the morning, but don't upset anyone there this evening.

**SAGITTARIUS:** (November 22 to December 21) Some added phase to correspondence which will get quick attention would be wise today, but later tonight be more conventional in your attitude.

**CAPRICORN:** (December 22 to January 20) This morning is the best time to come to decisions concerning any problematical affairs, and ingenuity will gain you more assets for the future.

**AQUARIUS:** (January 21 to February 19) You are able to gain your personal wishes today if you get an early start on them. Confide in your pals who can also be of assistance on a new assignment.

**PISCES:** (February 20 to March 20) You get excellent ideas for your progress in the morning today, so note them down, but later tonight don't change any plans you have made.

Birthstone of February: Amethyst — Onyx



## Washington launches offensive for African markets

ABIDJAN (AFP) — The United States has launched a major bid to conquer African markets, described by Washington's Secretary of Commerce Ron Brown as a "preserve of the former colonial powers."

Mr. Brown arrived in Abidjan Sunday at the start of an African tour and went swiftly to business, meeting Ivory Coast's president and prime minister, talking to a score of government officials from west and central Africa, visiting a fish-farm as well as the local stock exchange in Abidjan, and opening an office of General Motors.

The 55-year-old lawyer also signed a contract for the Chadwick International company worth some \$92 million to build 6,000 homes in the Ivorian economic capital.

"For too long, Africa has been virtually ignored," Mr. Brown said, calling his delegation's tour a "historic" one.

American exports to the continent — mainly to South Africa (49 per cent), Nigeria (12 per cent), and Angola (five per cent) — constitute more than one per cent of total U.S. exports. The United States is the third largest exporter to Ivory Coast and the seventh client for imports.

After a deep recession, Ivory Coast's economy has begun growing again since 1994, largely because of the devaluation of the CFA franc — the common currency of several African nations pegged to the French franc — in January of that year.

American investors are attracted by the recovery and by a privatisation programme, particularly in sectors such as telecommunications, food processing, energy, information technology, trans-

port and the environment.

"We are here to lay claim to our share of the region's growing markets," Mr. Brown said. "The United States will no longer cede African markets to our trade competitors."

In a message to the former colonial capital Paris, Mr. Brown said: "France has its own reasons, historical links with French-speaking Africa, but 'not any special privilege'."

He repeatedly stressed that "the private sector holds the key to Africa's future," taking up President Bill Clinton's recent statement to Congress about world trade policy and development in Africa.

"Democracy and free enterprise have to go hand in hand," Mr. Brown declared.

Referring to his own African ancestry, Mr. Brown stated that 15 per cent of Americans are of African descent. He added that it was in Africa's interest as an emerging continent to ally itself with the most powerful economy in the world.

The message has gone down well in Ivory Coast. In a lengthy speech in English, Prime Minister Kablan Daniel Duncan described the country as a traditional haven of economic liberalism and openness to the outside world. He called on donor countries to continue to provide financial support and to help structural adjustment efforts.

The United States has cut bilateral aid to Africa, but Mr. Brown said he was not concerned about that. "We looked at Africa in terms of aid" too much, he stated, claiming that the road ahead lay in open and honest competition.



Downtown Amman was bustling with activity Monday as people took advantage of the first day of a 5-day holiday to

shop for clothing and other needs to celebrate 'Eid Al Fitr which begins today (photo by Rana Hussein)

## Shopping activity booms for Eid Al Fitr

AMMAN (J.T.) — Jabal Al Hussein streets were so crowded with shoppers for Eid Al Fitr that traffic police had to close part of the main street opposite the amusement city to ease the traffic congestion which lasted until early morning hours.

Merchants described their sales as good somehow because of low prices noting that sales were mostly in children's wear, gifts and toys. In Irbid, a number of owners of gift and toy shops reported that business slackened during the month of Ramadan because people were more concerned with buying consumer commodities more than gifts.

Some store owners said

that sales retreated especially in the first half of the month compared with other previous Ramadan.

Ahmad Othman who owns a gift and toy store said that he sells toys and gifts at prices ranging from JD 1 to JD 30 but that demand for them was less than expected.

"People are more concerned over buying basic commodities and clothes for the winter," he added.

According to Ziyad Abu Taha, another store keeper, sales during Ramadan were

far below expectation especially in the first half of the month when there was a near recession situation although prices of gifts and toys have not changed during the month.

Mueen Bani Hani, another store owner, said that it is during the last part of the month that some life was breathed into the market when people started purchasing gifts and toys for their children to be given at the end of the holy month and during the feast.

## Falling prices bring Iraqi crowds to souks for first time in years

BAGHDAD (AFP) — Iraqis for the first time in years rushed to buy gifts for Eid Al Fitr holiday starting Tuesday as prices fell because of optimism over a future deal allowing Baghdad to resume oil exports.

"Finally our salary allows us to buy something, I avoided the souks (traditional markets) for years because prices were too high," Yassin Omran, a civil servant, told AFP on the eve of the holiday.

Because of the Iraqi dinar's spectacular recovery in the last month, it was the first time so many Iraqis had crowded into the souks to buy clothes, shoes and candy for the holiday which marks the end of the fasting month of Ramadan.

Since Iraq agreed in January to discuss a U.N. resolution allowing it to export some of its oil to buy food and medicine, the Iraqi currency has firmed from almost 3,000 to the dollar to 630 to the dollar on Sunday.

Meanwhile, prices have dropped around 70 per cent for the first time since U.N. trade and oil sanctions were imposed on Iraq after it invaded Kuwait on Aug. 2, 1990.

The government's decision to pay wages to its employees before the holiday has also helped propel people to the souks.

"Customers started arriving very early, even before we had time to put the goods on display," according to Abu Ahmad, who sells children's clothing at the Shorjah souk. "Everybody is happy about the lower prices."

The sidewalks of the neighbourhood have this year turned into giant marketplace where merchants sell clothing, beauty products, or kitchen utensils at prices which are much lower than in the stores.

Although the Western-style stores are less busy than the working-class souks, "the situation has improved a lot," according to Anwar Jaber, an

owner of a store selling fabrics. He now sells a metre of cloth for 2,000 dinars compared to 12,000 dinars a month ago.

Jewellers meanwhile did brisk business. "It's not just young married couples — the majority of our customers — who have been buying jewellery in the past few days, but also many other people who consider gold as a refuge," according to a jeweller who asked not to be named.

Um Sahira, who steered her four girls through the crowds, came out of one souk empty-handed. "The prices are lower but everything is still too expensive for us," she said.

Mr. Omran, the government employee, said although he was buying some gifts he could not buy enough for all his children.

Meanwhile, the alleyways and streets stained with the blood of slaughtered sheep throughout working-class dis-

tricts of Baghdad bear witness to an economic recovery that has ruined business for smugglers.

The smugglers who until a few weeks ago made a tidy living selling sheep abroad illegally for hard currency have been forced to sell them off cut-price because of the spectacular rise in the value of the dinar against the dollar.

The plummeting value of the greenback means it is no longer worth the risk of sneaking across the border to sell the animals in Saudi Arabia or Jordan, where Iraqi meat is highly prized.

So, instead, unscrupulous traders are slaughtering the animals in the streets without any form of hygiene and selling them at 40 per cent less than the butchers.

A kilogramme of lamb, which up until a month ago cost as much as 5,000 dinars, was selling on the streets of Baghdad for 700 dinars this weekend.

## Egyptian business delegation to travel to Iraq next week

CAIRO (AFP) — An Egyptian business delegation will travel to Iraq at the end of this month to seal a commercial accord worth \$40 million between the two countries, Iraqi sources here said Monday.

The vice president of the Union of Egyptian Industries (UEI), Mohammad Mekki, will lead the delegation of 31 businessmen and industrialists to Baghdad on Feb. 28, the sources said.

They will work out details of a protocol agreed in principle during an Iraqi mission to Cairo in January to sell to Iraq around \$40 million worth of Egyptian food and medicine.

The delegation will also work out a payment schedule for the supplies, which are not banned by the international trade embargo slapped on Iraq after its 1990 invasion

of Kuwait, the sources said.

A second protocol to sell to Baghdad more food and medicine worth \$150 million will also be discussed and should be completed in the next few months, they said.

The Egyptian government daily Al-Ahram announced the visit Monday but did not mention the protocols. The UEI could not be reached for confirmation.

The delegation's week-long visit also aims to pave the way for the planned March 19 reopening of Egypt's commercial centre in Baghdad, which was closed after the August 1990 invasion of Kuwait, the sources said.

The Egyptian businessmen will meet with Iraqi Industries Union President Adnan Al Qodsi and the president of the Iraqi Union of Chambers of Commerce.

## DAILY BUSINESS

A review of news from the Arabic press

### Committee recommends issuing 10.05m new shares by four companies

THE COMMITTEE entrusted with studying the issuance of shares of the Ministry of Industry and Trade has recommended issuing 10.05 million new shares, valued at JD 18.25 million, for four public shareholding companies. The new shares, which involve the Union Bank for Savings and Investment, the Arab International Hotels, Al Safi Salt and the Mining Investments, will be put for private subscription for some companies or for public subscription for the others. The committee recommended that the minister approve the issuance of two million shares by the Union Bank through private subscription to raise the bank's capital to JD 11.2 million. This first step towards raising the capital to JD 20 million, in accordance with the Central Bank demand, would entail issuing five million shares at JD 2.5 per share representing JD 12.5 million and JD 1.5 premium. The bank's current capital is JD 7.2 million, 76.6 per cent of which is owned by Jordanian shareholders and 23.4 per cent by Sirt Securities N.V.

The committee also recommended that the minister authorise the Arab International Hotels to issue 1.3 million shares to raise its capital from JD 7.7 million to JD 9 million. The share price was proposed at JD 5 per share to value the new shares at a total of JD 6.5 million. Jordanian ownership in this company is 92 per cent with the remaining eight per cent held by non-Jordanians. Of the local investors, the Jordan Investment Corporation holds 35 per cent of the equity.

The last two recommendations were for Safi Salt to issue 5.5 million shares valued at JD 1 per share and for Mining Investments to issue 1.25 million shares through public subscription at JD 1 per share. Mining Investments, currently under establishment, has a JD 5 capital of which JD 3.75 million were covered by the founders (Al Aswak).

### TCC to begin distribution of telephone line from Abdali exchange next month

THE TELECOMMUNICATIONS Corporation (TCC) will take over the Al Abdali telephone exchange early next month after the completion of the expansion project which added 5,000 new telephone lines to the exchange. The expansion will allow the corporation to provide the telephone service to applicants on the waiting list according to the date of the request. A quarter of the lines to be available will be given to new applicants against paying triple the normal fees. The corporation has completed expansion projects in Salt and Madaba where 1,000 new lines were provided to each of them. In Jerash, the expansion provided 608 new telephone line.

Starting with April, the corporation will begin implementing subscribers with all their needs for communication services, raising the corporation's technical, administrative and financial efficiency and shouldering all the responsibilities towards economic and social development in the Kingdom. This reorganisation, the corporation's head said, will be followed by taking gradual new working measures that would cover all aspects of the corporation's functions. He added that the TCC would continue to operate and maintain public telephones but the expansion plan in this area will not be continued as the government intends to give it to private sector investments (Al Dustour).

## UAE orders abrogation, liquidation of BCCI

ABU DHABI (AFP) — The United Arab Emirates (UAE) has abolished the collapsed BCCI bank and ordered the liquidation of its branches in the country after a Luxembourg court cleared the last hurdle for compensating depositors.

The central bank's order, published Monday in the semi-official newspaper Al Itihad, will pave the way for payments to nearly 40,000 creditors of the Bank of Credit and Commerce International (BCCI), inside the UAE, according to bankers.

"The BCCI and its eight branches in the UAE are hereby cancelled from the record of licensed commercial banks and all their licences are withdrawn," said the order by central bank chairman, Mohammad Al Muraikhi. "The bank and its

eight branches are to be liquidated in accordance with UAE laws, starting from the date of the order and ending in three years."

The decision appointed court receiver Abdul Aziz Said and two other men, Abdul Hadi Yaghi and Abdul Rahim Sankis, as liquidators of the bank.

It took effect on Jan. 22 but it was not clear when the liquidation will be completed. Officials, however, said payments for the depositors would be made in instalments just after liquidation starts.

The UAE emirate of Abu Dhabi controlled around 77 per cent of BCCI before it was shut worldwide in July 1991 for allegations of massive fraud said to have involved more than half its assets of nearly \$21 billion.

## JORDAN MARKETPLACE

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Central Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate Bulletin		
Date: February 18, 1996		
Currency	Rid	Qitr
U.S. Dollar	0.7080	0.7100
Sterling Pound	1.0980	1.1035
Deutsche Mark	0.4863	0.4887
Swiss Franc	0.5971	0.6001
French Franc	0.1413	0.1420
Japanese Yen*	0.6724	0.6758
Dutch Guilder	0.4342	0.4364
Swedish Krona		

LONDON EXCHANGE RATES		
LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar on the London foreign exchange and bullion markets Monday.		
One U.S. dollar	1.3848/58	Canadian dollar
	1.4440/50	Deutschemarks
	1.6176/86	Dutch guilders
	1.1740/50	Swiss francs
	29.71/75	Belgian francs
	4.9768/18	French francs
	1581.9/3.4	Italian lire
	104.22/32	Japanese yen
	6.8720/20	Swedish crowns
	6.3230/80	Norwegian crowns
	5.5845/45	Danish crowns
	1.3940/70	Singapore dollars
	0.7544/49	Australian dollars
	7.7330/40	Hong Kong dollars
One sterling	\$1.5494/04	
Gold (ounce)	\$405.40/405.90	



## Sampras back at No. 1 after beating Agassi

SAN JOSE, California (R) — Pete Sampras blew past Andre Agassi 6-2, 6-2 and soared to the top of the world's rankings in winning the \$328,000 byssase open in San Jose on Sunday.

Sampras took over the No. 1 spot from Austrian Thomas Muster. Agassi remains at No. 3.

"The number one is just icing on the cake," Sampras said. "I played as well as I could today."

Known as the game's most effective server, Sampras showed the fans at the sold-out San Jose arena that he is improving from the baseline, as he consistently out-stroked a volatile, angry Agassi.

"There's some matches where you go through ups and downs, but tonight everything just clicked," Sampras said. "I was hitting the ball clean. I couldn't have played better. Everything just jelled. I didn't serve that well but I hit my groundstrokes as well as I ever hit them."

Agassi, who received a point penalty in the second set for swearing at chair umpire Richard Kaufman, tipped his hat to his opponent.

"I got outplayed and didn't raise my level at the right moments," Agassi said. "But nothing Pete does surprises me. He was hitting the ball big off the ground and only made a few errors. He not only played 100 per cent of his level, but he played 100 per cent of the right points."

Sampras set the tone of the match early with devastating running forehands and deep crosscourt backhands that forced Agassi to press himself to hit winners. He broke Agassi with blazing crosscourt forehand winner in the second game of the first set.

Agassi got a break point in the seventh game, but dumped a backhand return into the net. Sampras broke Agassi again to take the set 6-2.

Then the fireworks began. Agassi slammed a ball into the crowd and received a warning from referee Richard Kaufman.

After the two played one point of Sampras serve, Agassi loudly swore loudly at Kaufman. The chair umpire didn't hear him, but linesperson Marie Smith, who was standing behind Agassi, did. She walked up to the chair and told Kaufman, who gave Agassi the point penalty. Agassi then let a string of epithets fly at Smith.

"It was real simple," Agassi said. "It started when the crowd was booing after I hit the ball into the stands. I swore loud enough for someone to hear me. Then she went and told Kaufman and that really pissed me off. Then I really let her have it."

After being broken to go down 0-2 in the next game, Agassi, now on the other side of the court, rocketed a ball in Smith's direction that loudly hit the backstop. But the



Pete Sampras

25-year-old received no further penalties.

A fired-up Agassi had his best chance to break in the third game, but just missed a backhand crosscourt return. At 2-4, the Las Vegas has Sampras on the ropes 15-40, but Sampras responded with two bullet service winners, an ace and deep second serve to capture the game.

"The 20 per cent of the time when I didn't return well was on some crucial points," Agassi said. "That's where I have to get rhythm. If I have three chances to break in two sets, I would at least expect to win one set."

Agassi fought off three match points on his own serve at 2-5, but Sampras tuned up the heat on his service game and won the match when Agassi over hit a service return.

"Pete's the toughest person to come from behind on. The toughest person to break, to hold serve on, everything," Agassi said.

1. Pete Sampras (USA)	4,555
2. Thomas Muster (Aust)	4,474
3. Andre Agassi (USA)	4,452
4. Boris Becker (Ger)	3,970
5. Michael Chang (USA)	3,537
6. Thomas Enqvist (Swe)	2,529
7. Yevgeni Kafelnikov (Rus)	2,393
8. Jim Courier (USA)	2,369
9. Goran Ivanisevic (Cro)	2,339
10. Wayne Ferreira (Rsa)	1,968
11. Sergi Bruguera (Spa)	1,685
12. Richard Krajicek (Ned)	1,678
13. Michael Stich (Ger)	1,561
14. Marc Rosset (Swi)	1,391
15. Arnaud Boetsch (Fra)	1,385
16. Alberto Costa (Spa)	1,364
17. Andrei Medvedev (UKr)	1,293
18. Gilbert Schaller (Aut)	1,291
19. MaliVai Washington (USA)	1,265
20. Magnus Larsson (Swe)	1,244



Former Marseille soccer players Jean Pierre Papin (right) and current team captain Pascal Ohmets (left) make foot and hand prints in the concrete at Marseille's Velodrome Stadium on Sunday. Some 40 former Marseille players

## Sharpe gives United the cutting edge

LONDON (AFP) — Lee Sharpe fired Manchester United into the quarter-finals of the FA Cup as last year's beaten finalists saw off bitter rivals Manchester City 2-1 in an explosive encounter at Old Trafford on Sunday.

Former England winger Sharpe struck a superb left-foot volley on the run from 10 yards in the 77th minute. Frenchman Eric Cantona had levelled a pulsating match with a controversial penalty five minutes from the break.

Sharpe said: "I am absolutely delighted with the goal. It's just starting to come good for me again."

"It was a typical FA Cup match and a typical derby match in very tough conditions. They made it difficult for us but I thought we deserved it by the end," he added.

City, at the wrong end of the Premiership and without a win at Old Trafford since 1974, started the match as 6-1 outsiders before Uwe Rosler, one of three Germans in the City line-up, put them into a shock ninth minute lead.

The German striker ran clear of the offside trap on to Georgian teenage sensation George Kinkladze's superb through ball and though the advancing Peter Schmeichel got a hand to his 25-yard lob, he could not prevent the ball flying inside his right-hand post.

It crowned an explosive start to an ill-tempered clash, which started with an unexpectedly generous tribute by United fans to former Liverpool boss Bob Paisley, who died last week.

But while the 35,000 home fans stood respectfully in the minute's silence for the former boss of their bitterest rivals, a small minority of the 7,000 City fans tried to disrupt the moment before they were shouted down by the majority.

The hostilities were not long in transferring to the pitch, where Roy Keane was booked after only two minutes for a tackle from behind on Kinkladze.

Six minutes later there was a mass flare-up as Michael Brown retaliated to Nicky Butt's lunge which resulted in bookings for the City defender and United striker Andy Cole.

City, playing more of a passing game through the middle since Nigel Cough was bought from Liverpool to supplement Kinkladze, continued to stretch United with a confidence that delighted their long-suffering fans.

Northern Irish international Steve Lomas robbed Ryan Giggs and beat Roy Keane to set up a 29th minute attack that ended with Schmeichel relieved to retrieve Rosler's fierce angled shot at the second attempt.

But United started to gain control as half-time approached with Welsh winger Giggs getting the measure of Nickey Summerbee on the left.

It took a combination of a flying save by German Eike Immel and a goal-line clearance by Brown to keep out Keane's 39th minute header from Giggs' corner.

But when the young Welshman slung the ball over a second time, new German defender Michael Frontzeck gave United their 36th minute lifeline, jostling with Frenchman Eric Cantona right under the nose of the referee.

Referee Wilkie stunned most of Old Trafford when he pointed to the spot for the Frenchman to step up and smack home his 10th goal of the season past Immel.

United stepped up the pressure early in the second half with Sharpe seeing his angled drive deflected into the side netting.

City were forced onto the defensive, with United probing both flanks through the intelligent prompting of Cantona.

Giggs should have scored a rare headed goal on 52 minutes but he directed his far post header onto the net after Pallister had flicked on Sharpe's right-wing corner.

But United eventually got the goal their pressure de-

served when Sharpe rifled home his fifth of the season to leave City still searching for their first win against United in seven years.

In the day's other Cup match, Liverpool strolled into the last 16 with a comfortable fourth round 4-0 victory over second division Shrewsbury on Sunday.

The Reds now have to play Charlton in round five at Anfield a week on Wednesday after goals by Stan Collymore, Robbie Fowler, Jason McAteer and an own goal by Dave Walton saw off a Shrewsbury side that restricted the visitors to 1-0 until the 70th minute.

"I thought the game lacked a bit of passion because of the 11 a.m. start. It seemed to affect both the players and the supporters," said Liverpool boss Roy Evans.

Draw for the sixth round of the FA Cup made on Sunday:

Leeds United or Port Vale v Liverpool or Charlton  
Nottingham Forest or Tottenham v Aston Villa  
Manchester United v Swindon or Southampton  
Grimsby Town or Chelsea v Huddersfield Town or Wimbledon  
(Matches to be played on March 9, 10, 11).

## Referee quits after Gascoigne incident

EDINBURGH (R) — Scottish soccer referee Jim McGilvray has resigned 16 days after giving England midfielder Paul Gascoigne a caution for celebrating a goal.

The experienced Edinburgh official submitted his resignation to the Scottish Football Association on Monday, saying he felt like a robot and that the much-publicised Gascoigne incident was "the last straw."

"That was the day I decided to pack it in," said the 47-year-old McGilvray, who had been a senior official in Scotland for 11 years.

"My stomach turned but under the system I had to yellow card Gazza, it was him or me."

"We are being programmed like robots with a list of instructions. I just can't carry on like this. I love my football but it is time to get out."

In the controversial match between Glasgow Rangers and Partick Thistle on February 3, McGilvray also gave red cards to two Partick players.

## Jordan's 44 points leads Bulls past Pacers

INDIANAPOLIS (R) — Michael Jordan poured in 44 points and Scottie Pippen added a season-high 40 to lead the Chicago Bulls to a 110-102 victory over the Indiana Pacers on Sunday.

Dennis Rodman tied a season high with 23 rebounds for the Bulls.

"We were in a zone, the team responded to us," Pippen said. "I have two all-stars on my team, even though Dennis didn't make the squad. Michael is the greatest scorer and Dennis is the greatest rebounder. We showed some dominance and stepped up."

Reggie Miller scored 24 points for Indiana.

In Charlotte, Glen Rice scored 32 points and Larry Johnson added 29 and eight rebounds as the Charlotte Hornets cruised to a 122-99 victory over the Milwaukee Bucks.

Benoit Benjamin had 21 points and 12 rebounds and Glenn Robinson netted 19 points for the Bucks.

At Minnesota, Juwan Howard scored 30 points and Tim Legler added a season-high 21 as the Washington Bullets snapped a six-game losing streak with a 108-96 victory over the Minnesota Timberwolves.

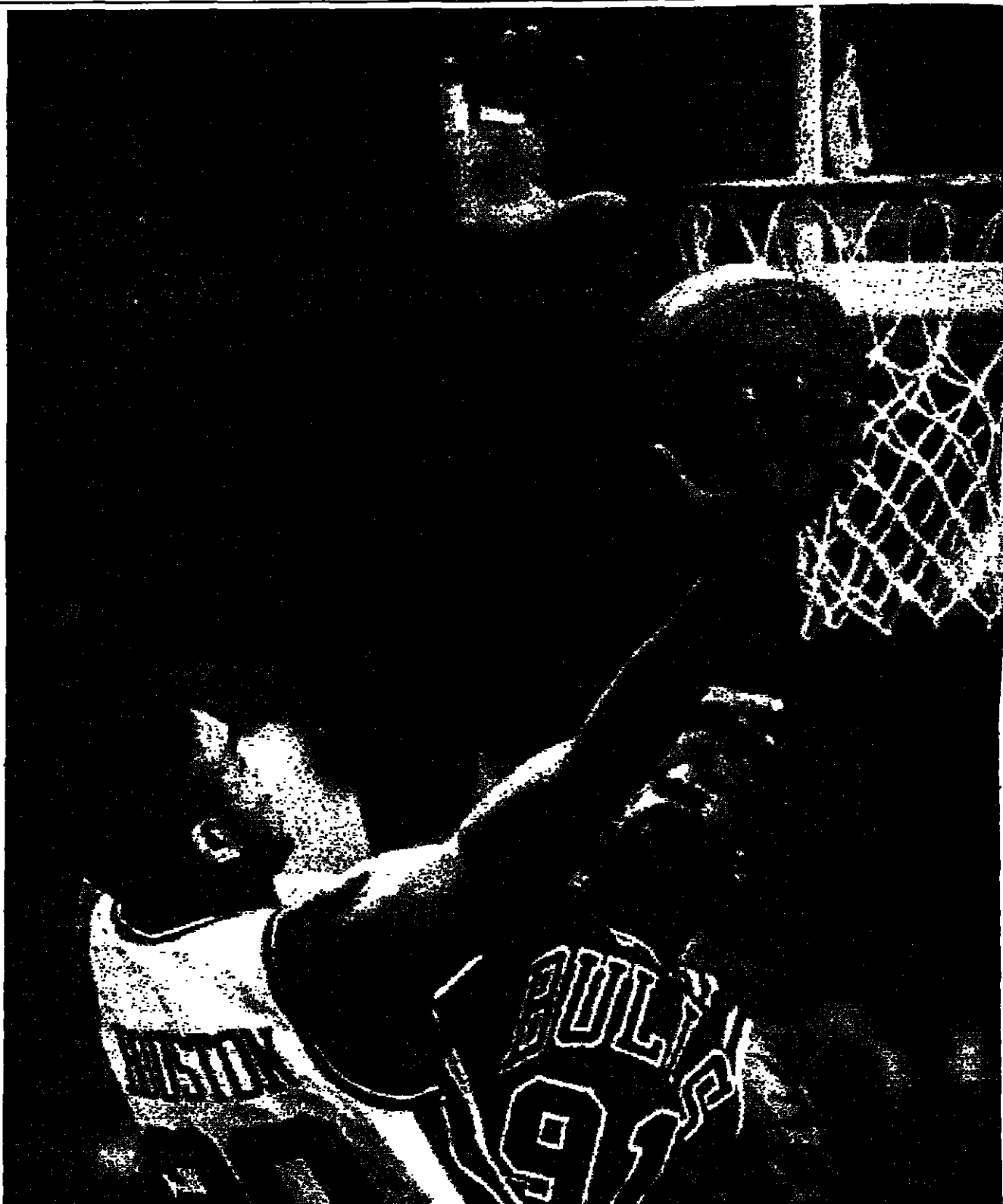
Rasheed Wallace had 19 points for Washington. "One word explains today — embarrassing," said Wolves coach Flip Saunders. Darrick Martin finished with 21 points for the Wolves.

In San Antonio, David Robinson scored 25 points, grabbed 12 rebounds and blocked seven shots and the San Antonio Spurs held Houston to 47 points over the final three quarters in a 93-79 win over the Rockets.

Houston was 3-of-17 in the final period as Olajuwon was held to two points. Olajuwon had 18 points.

In Vancouver, Sean Kemp shook off a minor hand injury to score 25 points and Hersey Hawkins and Detlef Schrempf sparked a key fourth-quarter run as the Seattle SuperSonics defeated the Vancouver Grizzlies, 118-109, for their sixth consecutive victory.

Kemp injured his hand



Detroit Pistons' Allan Houston (20) takes the ball to the basket and pushes back Chicago Bulls' Dennis Rodman (31).

dunking in the first quarter and sat out most of the second quarter. He returned to score 13 points in the second half.

Blue Edwards led Vancouver with 23 points. The Grizzlies have dropped eight of their last nine games.

In Portland, Mookie Blaylock scored eight of his 16 points in the fourth quarter, including five of the final six points as the Atlanta Hawks rallied to beat the Portland Trail Blazers 93-90.

Steve Smith and Grant Long scored 18 points apiece as the Hawks won for the 14th time in their last 19 games.

Robinson finished with 20 points.

In Denver, Tom Hammond scored a season-high 26 points and Mahmoud Abdul Rauf added 23 as the Denver Nuggets raced to a 13-point halftime lead and snapped their three-game losing streak with a 117-93 rout of the Boston Celtics.

In the first period of NBA game action at the Palace, Chicago won in overtime 112 to 109 (Reuters photo).

Don MacLean scored 17 points and Bryant Stith added 15 for Denver, which won for just the fifth time in 16 games.

David Wesley and Eric Williams scored 19 points for Boston.

### RESULTS

Chicago	110	Indiana	102
Charlotte	122	Milwaukee	99
Washington	108	Minnesota	96
San Antonio	93	Houston	79
Seattle	118	Vancouver	109
Denver	117	Boston	93
Atlanta	93	Portland	90

## UEFA to seek governments help over Bosman case

LONDON (R) — European soccer's top officials are to seek help from their governments to discuss the sweeping changes in transfer regulations and nationality qualification announced by the European Union in December.

UEFA member nations meeting at a London hotel on Sunday decided to seek more time to implement the decisions taken by the EU with UEFA fearing that the Bosman judgement removing UEFA's three foreigners rule for

teams in European competitions could threaten the future of international football.

The EU gave UEFA a March 1 deadline to remove their nationality restriction and the European soccer body will be watching closely to see whether the voluntary policy works when the next ties are played on March 6.

UEFA spokesman David Will of Scotland said: "There seems to be an interpretation that we are ready to break the law that

is rubbish. "What we are saying is give us time. The transfer system evolved over 100 years and the nationality restrictions have applied for 30 years."

"We are being asked to produce out of a hat some way of safeguarding home-grown players overnight. We want governments to see national identities are retained in sport which we feel should be a special case."

All eight European

champions league quarter-finalists have given UEFA breathing space by voluntarily agreeing to continue with the three plus two regulation this season.

"They felt we must finish the competition with the rules as they were when we started," added Will.

UEFA president Lennart Johansson added: "UEFA has no alternative but to accept the law and we do not need to concern ourselves with this problem now the clubs have made a voluntary agreement."

"We shall turn to national governments for their assistance in getting special treatment for sport in future. That might take some time but we have to start somewhere."

UEFA chiefs will continue their discussions in London this week with an executive committee meeting discussing changes in their constitution as well as this summer's Olympics in the United States. European club football and further talks on the Bosman issues.



## Ivanisevic wins Dubai final

DUBAI (R) — Goran Ivanisevic produced almost flawless tennis to beat Alberto Costa of Spain 6-4, 6-3 in the final of the \$1 million Dubai Open on Sunday.

The fourth-seeded Croatian controlled the game with penetrating ground strokes, often mixing them with deft volleys from the net, to beat the unseeded Spaniard, ranked 23 in the world, and win his first hard-court title.

Ivanisevic, ranked ninth in the world, broke Costa with ease in the sixth game and then comfortably held on to his serve to take the first set.

The second set followed the same pattern as the Croat kept unrelenting pressure on the tentative Spaniard, sending down a string of aces.

Ivanisevic, who earned \$142,000 for his efforts, broke Costa for a 2-1 lead and then went on to wrap up the game and with it the match when Costa, who earned \$84,000, hit a return into the net.

In all Ivanisevic blasted 13 aces in a match lasting just 58 minutes and celebrated his victory by throwing his shirt into the stands.

"I am thrilled to win this tournament. It has been a great week for me and I think I played some great tennis," said the jubilant Croat, who won his own country's open a fortnight ago in Zagreb. It was the first time he has won two consecutive tournaments.

"I am not thinking of being No. 1 in the world at the moment. I hope I can win Wimbledon this year. I am really playing the best tennis of my career," he said.

The top seeded doubles pair, Byron Black of Zimbabwe and Grant Connell of Canada, outclassed the Czech pairing of Karel Novacek and Jiri Novak 6-0, 6-1.

## Fredericks record warning for Johnson

LIEVIN, France (AP) — Frankie Fredericks of Namibia became the first man to run 200 metres under 20 seconds indoors as he broke the world record to highlight the Lievin international track meet Sunday.

Fredericks did 19.92 seconds to better the mark 20.25 seconds was held by Britain's Linford Christie, who did it in the same meet last year.

Fredericks was second in both the 100 and 200 metres at the 1992 Olympics and was second in the 200 to American Michael Johnson in the 1995 World Championships after winning in 1993.

The world outdoor record is 19.72 held by Pietr Mennea of Italy set in 1979 at Mexico City. Fredericks' best outdoors is 19.85.

Fredericks ran in lane six, the same lane that Christie ran in last year and was a power down the final straightaway.

"First one under 20. It's a great track and it was a great opportunity," Fredericks said. The Lievin track has been the site of three men's and a woman's 200 world record.

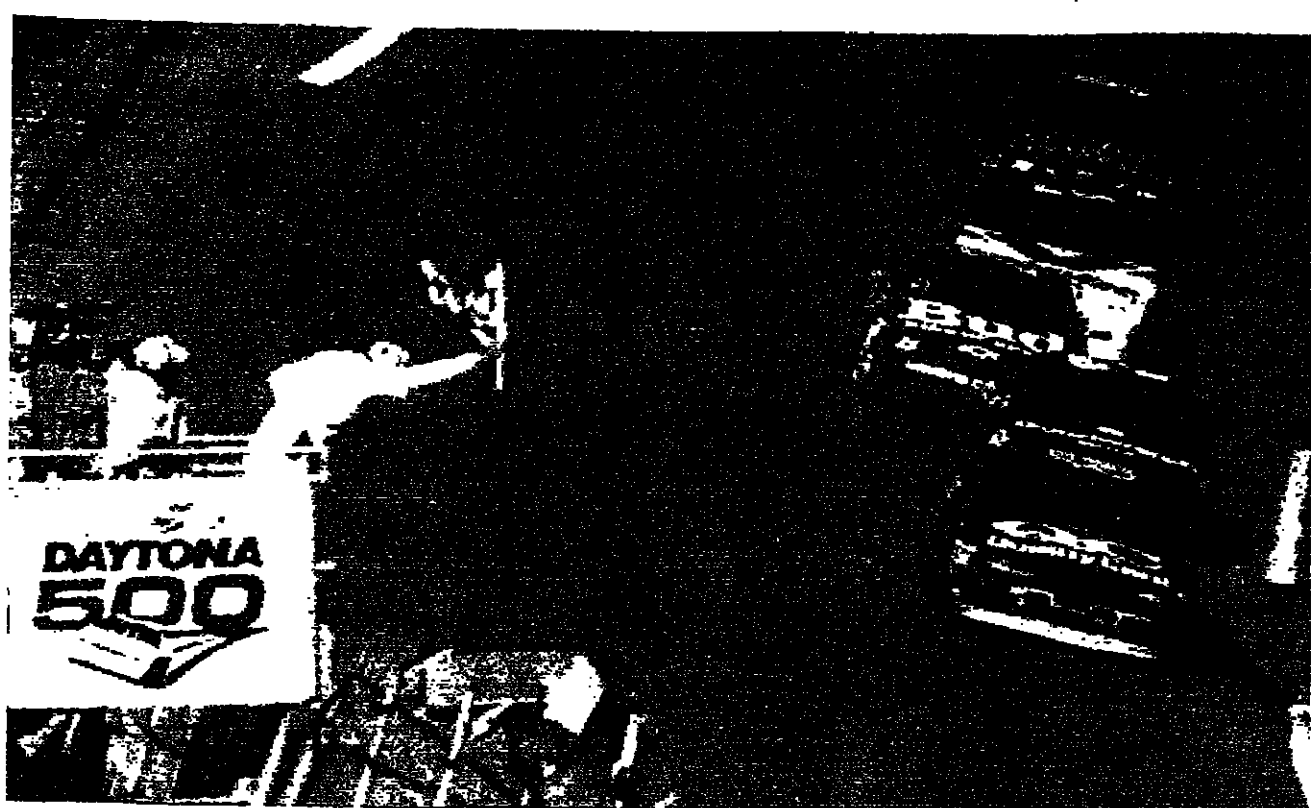
Fredericks jumped into the air and punched when he saw the time just after the finish line.

"I ran in lane six because I didn't want to run someone else's race," Fredericks said. "I was confident after the record in the 100 last week."

He ran 10.05 in Tampere, Finland last Monday.

Second was Norway's Geir Moen in 20.56. Third was Robson da Silva of Brazil, 21.32 while John Regis of Britain was disqualified.

Venuste Niyongaba of



Dale Jarrett crosses the finish line to win the Daytona 500 in his No. 88 Ford Thunderbird on Sunday at the Daytona International Speedway. Following Jarrett are the Chevrolet Monte

Carlos of Dale Earnhardt No. 3 and Ken Schrader and the Fords of Mark Martin and Jeff Burton (Reuters photo)

## Jarrett wins Daytona 500

DAYTONA BEACH, Florida (R) — Dale Jarrett, driving a Ford Thunderbird, held off Dale Earnhardt to win the Daytona 500 by .12 seconds and 362.775 on Sunday.

Jarrett, who took over the lead for good on lap 177 of the 200-lap race over the 2.5-mile Trioval Track, blocked Earnhardt's Chevrolet Monte Carlo twice on the final lap to win one of the most competitive Daytona races in recent years. Fifteen drivers exchanged the lead 32 times.

Ken Schrader took a Chevrolet to third place, two car lengths behind Jarrett, and won \$169,547. Fellow-American Mark Martin, in a Ford, finished immediately behind Schrader for fourth place, worth \$118,840.

Two-time defending race champion Sterling Marlin's bid for an unprecedented third straight victory ended with engine failure on lap 80.

Marlin's Chevrolet had overcome some early handling problems to take the lead for three laps.

"We got back where we wanted to be and the engine broke on us," Marlin said. "With this car, we either win, finish second or blow up."

Defending NASCAR series champion Jeff Gordon hit the wall on the 10th lap after being hit from behind.

The 24-year-old Chevrolet driver returned to the race later but quickly exited again. In 1993, Jarrett, the son of NASCAR racing legend Ned Jarrett, passed Earnhardt

with one lap remaining to claim his first 500 victory. Earnhardt won \$215,065.

This year's race was Earnhardt's fourth second-place finish in the Super Bowl of American stock car racing.

Earnhardt has won the NASCAR Winston Cup series championship seven times, but is winless in the Daytona 500 in 18 attempts.

"I knew he Earnhardt wanted it bad and that's why I hated to see him right behind me," said Jarrett, who led 40 of the 200 laps. "He had drafting help, but I had a Robert Yates engine."

When Jarrett took the lead he guided a five-car draft that included Earnhardt, Schrader, Martin and Jeff Burton, who finished fifth, in the

waning moments of the race. "It was difficult playing cat-and-mouse with him," Jarrett said. "The last few laps themselves seemed like 500 miles."

After the field took the white flag, Earnhardt went to the outside, but was blocked by Jarrett.

Earnhardt made one more late charge in the final turn trying to pass on both sides of Jarrett, who blocked him.

"We just didn't have enough," said Earnhardt, who started the race from the pole position. "Our car was super, but the Fords were super, too."

Jarrett also won last Sunday's Busch Clash and finished second in Saturday's 300-mile grand national series race.

## Weah stretched off after scoring Milan winner

PARIS (AFP) — World 'footballer of the year' George Weah headed a last minute winner to help AC Milan extend their Italian League lead on Sunday but then had to be stretched off after banging his head after clashing with Bari goalkeeper Alberto Fontana. His condition was later described as satisfactory.

Milan twice took the lead in their home fixture against struggling Bari thanks to two Marco Simone goals — one a 28th minute penalty.

Bari, however, hit back through midfielder Francesco Pedone and then through Luigi Sala.

Weah's late goal was his third in as many games.

Main rivals Fiorentina, deprived of Argentinian top scorer Gabriel Batistuta, could only manage a 0-0 draw at bottom club Cremonese.

Parma, whose coach Nevio Scala has been linked with Bayern Munich, beat lowly Padova 2-1. Striker Alessandro Melli and international defender Antonio Bannarivo put them clear after 57 minutes.

Padova replied in the last minute through Dutch midfielder Michel Kreek.

Cagliari made light of losing coach Giovanni Trapattoni in midweek by winning 3-0 at home to Sampdoria. Defender Nicolò Nappi, Brazilian born Belgian international Luis Oliveira and midfielder Pierpaolo Bisoli were the scorers, lifting the Sardinian club six points clear of the relegation zone.

There were also 1-0 away wins for both champions

Juventus, at Napoli thanks to Fabrizio Ravanelli's 85th minute effort, and Roy Hodgson's revitalised Inter Milan.

Inter beat Torino through Marco Branca's third goal in two games.

Lazio won the Rome derby thanks to a Giuseppe Signori penalty six minutes from time. The Lazio forward was then sent off two minutes later after being shown his second yellow card.

Atletico Madrid maintained their eighth place lead at the top of the Spanish First Division when they beat Espanyol 2-0 — but Barcelona stayed in second place with a 2-1 victory at Oviedo.

Champions Real Madrid dropped their first points since Arsenal's victory over three weeks ago, drawing 0-0 at home to Valencia.

Former Welsh manager John Toshack saw his present side Deportivo La Coruna, Iglesias' last club, come from behind to draw 1-1 with his former club Real Sociedad.

Sociedad's striker Luis Perez opened the scoring in the 31st minute, but the Spanish Cup holders drew level in the 65th minute through David.

In France, leaders Paris St. Germain were plunged into crisis after crashing to a third straight defeat when they

## EUROPEAN SOCCER

Atletico scored through defender Juan Lopez just before halftime and Bulgarian international striker Luboslav Oenev hit home the winner in the 68th minute.

It was Espanyol's first home defeat of the season. Barcelona retained an outside chance of catching the leaders with a hard-earned 2-1 victory over Real Oviedo.

Although veteran Spanish international playmaker Jose Bakero put them ahead in the first minute, Oviedo equalised in the 27th through striker Oliverio Oli.

The Catalan club had to wait till the 83rd minute for midfielder Guillermo Amor to net the winner.

Compostella remained in third place thanks to a 1-0 away win over Rayo Vallecano — Brazilian midfielder Fabiano scoring in the 43rd minute.

were beaten 1-0 at Strasbourg.

They also had Pascal Nouma sent off for a reckless two-footed tackle on Philippe Raschke.

Strasbourg's Franck Leboeuf converted a match-winning penalty just before half-time after PSG defender Stephane Mahe had brought down striker Gerald Batlle in the area.

The result came after last week's humiliating 3-2 defeat to Montpellier and a 1-0 setback against Monaco. Second-placed Auxerre also shot themselves in the foot when they went down 2-1 to Rennes.

Republic of Ireland striker Tony Casarino scored his 19th goal of the season to put Olympique Marseille on top of the French second division. They beat Caen 1-0 in front of 40,000 fans.

## Halard fails double title bid

PARIS (AFP) — French player Julie Halard-Decugis failed to notch up a double triumph at the \$450,000 Paris Indoor Open on Sunday.

After beating Iva Majoli of Croatia 7-5, 7-6 (7/4) in the singles final she joined forces with compatriot Nathalie Tauziat but was beaten in the doubles final.

The fourth-seeded French pair were beaten in straight-sets 4-6, 3-6 by third-seeds Jana Novotna of the Czech Republic and Kristie Boogert of the Netherlands.

## Sporting fire coach after poor results

LISBON (R) — Portuguese first division side Sporting fired coach Carlos Queiroz on Sunday after a string of poor results.

A meeting of Sporting's senior management decided to terminate his contract with the club issuing a short statement saying Queiroz would be replaced by junior team trainer and former Sporting international Fernando Mendes.

"It is not possible for Queiroz to remain as coach and the club is willing to rescind his contract amicably," the statement read. Queiroz was not available for comment.

The dismissal follows months of media speculation about Queiroz's future, not

quelled by assurances from sporting president Pedro Santana Lopes three weeks ago that the coach would stay.

Sporting lost three, won two and drew one of their last six matches, but it was the three consecutive defeats in January and Saturday's dismal 0-0 draw against Lisbon rivals Benfica that sealed Queiroz's fate. He was also criticised for not building an aggressive enough side and for lack of player discipline.

Saturday's uninspiring performance left Benfica and Sporting on 47 points, 14 points behind leaders Porto.

If Sporting, who have not won the title since 1982, had beaten Benfica they would have moved into second place above Boavista.

## Wiberg claims 1st gold for Sweden

SIERRA NEVADA, Spain (R) — Olympic champion Pernilla Wiberg of Sweden outclassed her rivals on a treacherously icy slalom course to win the women's combined gold medal at the Alpine skiing world championships on Monday.

Wiberg, the only Swedish Alpine skier to win Olympic gold in Norway two years ago, produced two textbook runs to finish more than two seconds ahead of veteran Austrian Anita Wachter after Friday's downhill and Mon-

day's two slalom legs.

Norway's Marianne Kjoerstad claimed bronze, for her first appearance on a major podium.

Wiberg was lying 19th, two seconds off the pace, after Friday's downhill but took a commanding lead of more than half a second with a flawless first leg on the slalom slope.

Almost half of the 34 starters crashed out during that leg in what coaches and racers said had been one of the most difficult slalom runs of

the entire season. The bottom part of the course was especially icy.

With Wachter the one to beat after the patchy run forced mistakes from other contenders, Wiberg produced a surprisingly aggressive second run to finish in a total time of three minutes 19.68 seconds.

It was Sweden's first gold at this southern European resort. Wachter, the 1988 Olympic champion in the discipline, finished in 3:21.73 and Kjoerstad in 3:22.35.



Namibian sprinter Frankie Fredericks in action as he sets a new zoom world record (Reuters photo)

Burundi and Maria Mutola of Mozambique just missed world indoor records.

Niyongaba too the 2,000 metres in 4 minutes, 54.77 seconds, less than a second away from Eamon Cough-

lan's world mark of 4:54.07. Mutola ran 1 minute, 57.52 seconds in the women's 800.

The world record is 1:56.40 set by Christine Wachtel of East Germany in 1988.

Sergei Bubke of Ukraine

took the pole vault at 5.95 metres (19 feet, 6 1/4 inches). He missed three times at a world record of 6.16 metres (20 feet, 2 1/2 inches). He has set 35 indoor and outdoor world pole vault records.

## Atlanta in a frenzy over Olympics

ATLANTA (AFP) — Five months ahead of the opening of the 1996 Olympic Games, Atlanta is in a frenzy to get ready for the biggest Olympic festival to date, hosting an estimated two million visitors, 10,800 athletes and 271 sporting events.

Downtown, the noise of jackhammers and heavy equipment is everywhere as sidewalks are being repaved and buildings renovated.

The Atlanta Committee for the Olympic Games said all major work for the Olympic sites is on schedule.

That includes an 84,643-seat three-storey stadium with a track that can be disassembled and moved, just off Interstate 75, a major thoroughfare. Remaining work includes exterior doors and plants, and the installation of the 40-metre Olympic cauldron.

The Olympic village at Georgia Tech University is also ready, including its red brick buildings with athletes' apartments — each with kitchen, living room and a child's drawing.

An international centre being completed on the site includes a new carillon that will play American tunes for all in the village to hear.

At the Olympic pool, only the grandstands and sun screens are still unfinished. Debbie Dorsey, director of the aquatic centre, said "everything will be ready on time" for water polo as well.

And the field hockey stadium at Morris Brown College is also nearly completed, with only the artificial turf remaining to be installed.

Around Atlanta, the jackhammers are in constant action. Some 10,000 trees are being planted in an effort to spruce up the city for the games.

The city known as the setting for "Gone With The Wind" is also erecting monuments for the occasion, including a black marble plaque honoring the author of the epic, Margaret Mitchell.

### GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF & TAMARA HIRSCH  
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SIX OF ONE		40	Pass	4"	Dbl
Both vulnerable. South deals.	NORTH	NT	Pass	50	Pass
♠ A K 4	♠ A K 4	♠ A K 4	♠ A K 4	♠ A K 4	♠ A K 4
♥ A J 2	♥ A J 2	♥ A J 2	♥ A J 2	♥ A J 2	♥ A J 2
♦ 8 5 3 2	♦ 8 5 3 2	♦ 8 5 3 2	♦ 8 5 3 2	♦ 8 5 3 2	♦ 8 5 3 2
♣ 10 5 4	♣ 10 5 4	♣ 10 5 4	♣ 10 5 4	♣ 10 5 4	♣ 10 5 4
WEST	EAST	WEST	EAST	WEST	EAST
♠ 10 8 7 6 2	♠ 10 8 7 6 2	♠ 10 8 7 6 2	♠ 10 8 7 6 2	♠ 10 8 7 6 2	♠ 10 8 7 6 2
♥ 8 3	♥ 8 3	♥ 8 3	♥ 8 3	♥ 8 3	♥ 8 3
♦ 7	♦ 7	♦ 7	♦ 7	♦ 7	♦ 7
♣ A 9 7 3	♣ A 9 7 3	♣ A 9 7 3	♣ A 9 7 3	♣ A 9 7 3	♣ A 9 7 3
SOUTH	NORTH	SOUTH	NORTH	SOUTH	NORTH
♠ 6	♠ 6	♠ 6	♠ 6	♠ 6	♠ 6
♥ K 9	♥ K 9	♥ K 9	♥ K 9	♥ K 9	♥ K 9
♦ K Q J 10 6 4	♦ K Q J 10 6 4	♦ K Q J 10 6 4	♦ K Q J 10 6 4	♦ K Q J 10 6 4	♦ K Q J 10 6 4
♣ K J 2	♣ K J 2	♣ K J 2	♣ K J 2	♣ K J 2	♣ K J 2
The bidding:	SOUTH	WEST	NORTH	EAST	Pass
10	Pass	2NT	Pass	Pass	Pass

would hinge on declarer's ability to guess the club situation. A slight assist from the enemy allowed South to show that the hand was unworkable regardless.

After winning the first heart, declarer ran off six diamond tricks, discarding two clubs from the table. West saw no reason to hold more than three spades, and that proved to be the defense's undoing. Declarer, when the defender's heart to retain three clubs. East was forced to hold two hearts.

After cashing the ace-king of spades for club suit, declarer ruffed a spade to bring about a three-card ending. East had come down to exactly two hearts so, as long as the club honors were split the hand was cold.

Spare exited with the jack of clubs. If East won, the forced heart return gave declarer the last two tricks. If West took the ace, following partner's queen, declarer would score the kings of clubs and ace of hearts at the end.

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>TODAY AT</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">CINEMA TEL: 634144</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>PHILADELPHIA</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Jean Claude Van Damme in</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>SUDDEN DEATH</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30 p.m.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">CINEMA TEL: 699238</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>PLAZA</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Adel Emam/Dalal Abdel Azeez/ Shereen Saaf AlNaser</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Sleeping on Honey</b> (Arabic)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">CINEMA TEL: 677420</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>CONCORD</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">CONCORD "1"</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Adel Emam/Dalal Abdel Azeez/ Shereen Saaf AlNaser</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Sleeping on Honey</b> (Arabic)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6, 8:15, 10:30</p> <p style="text-align: center;">CONCORD "2"</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Van Dam/Roger Moore</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>THE QUEST</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Shows: 12, 1:45, 3:30, 5:15, 6:45</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">AMMOUN THEATRE &amp; CINEMA/TEL: 618274 - 618275</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Ahmad Zaki / Ragdah In</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>ESTAKOZA</b> (Arabic)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Shows: 12:30, 3, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Nabil &amp; Hisham's Theatre TEL: 625155</p> <p style="text-align: center;">"Ahlan Tatbie" play</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Welcome Normalisation</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Shows: 8:30 p.m.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">For reservation call 625155</p>
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...that, the newspaper said.